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MAY—MOVING.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

Lily—in the arm-chair drooping
By the western window's ligh
Watching busy swallows tracing
Circles on the robe of night;
Marking how the sunbeams linger,
Longer still each coming day,
Reads the message—"Spring is coming,—
Mother—must we move in May?"

"Mother, darling, are we going,
You and I, away from here;
From sunny nook and cozy ingle,
Are we going, mother dear?
Shall I wake to see no longer,
Vine-leaf shadows on my bed;
Or, through yonder shabby lattice,
Watch the bursting roses red?

"Never mind the crazy door way,
Mother, for a little while;
Brother Frank went out from yonder,
And I seem to see his smile,
As he stooped to pass the portal
With his musket dropping low—
Seem to see and hear the parting,
'Mother, bless me ere I go.'

"Never mind the little window,
With its cracked and tiny pane—
Through it comes the moonlight softly,
And it keeps out winter rain;
And mother, darling, through its limits
Come the sights and sounds to me
That I love beyond all others—
Of sailing ship and sounding sea.

"Nay—I sometimes idly fancy
That my glad free soul will fly
Out, and up, to God in Heaven,
Through that window when I die;
Mother, darling—kiss me, mother—
Let me on your bosom lay,
Sing the hymn I love so dearly—
We'll forget the first of May."

* * * * * *

Lily, fair and pale, was lying
In the western window's light,
But the busy circling swallow
Had no watcher of his flight:
A soldier lad—a weeping mother—
Knelt where Lily peaceful lay—
Or what was Lily, for her spirit
Had moved out the first of May.

THE FORTUNES OF CONRAD.

A ROMANCE OF ANCIENT BRITTANY.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PRINCE GETS READY FOR WORK.

Prince Bertrand did not stop on his way from the royal chamber. He supposed that Conrad du Nord might be in the palace—perhaps near to the king—but he cared not to see him then. He had another plan in his mind. In the court he found Poins, whom he called apart from the rest of his followers.

"Did Thamar accompany Sir Phillip to Rennes?" asked the prince.

"He did," replied Poins.

"I think Thamar is devoted to me."

"You may depend upon him, my lord; I will stake my life."

"I am going to my own apartment. Send Thamar to me. Convey the order to him privately, and bid him make no demonstration of his coming."

Thamar was a stout, dark-visaged guardsman, who had been recently promoted to the royal corps upon the recommendation of the prince; and when he received the message which Poins brought, he hastened to obey. He found Bertrand alone, in a closet adjacent to the bed-chamber; and it was easy to see, from his manner, that he was anxious to please the heir to the throne of Brittany.

"You have ridden far, and you may be seated," said Bertrand, after the usual salutations had been exchanged.

This was an honor, and the guardsman seemed well pleased with it.

"Now, master Thamar, I wish you to give me your attention." The prince could assume a tone of exceeding frankness when he chose, and in such a tone he now spoke. "It must be evident that ere many years—perhaps ere many months—I shall be king of Brittany; and I am even now estimating the characters of those who may be called to serve me in the best offices. When I recommended you to the station you now occupy, I believed that you would honor the office; and, I am free to confess, I had another object in view: I desired that you should become acquainted with the routine of the business of the royal guard. Sir Philip de Savenay is getting old; and, when he gives up the command, I would have good and efficient men from among whom to select his successor."

Thamar understood this, and his face glowed with ambitious hope. He was a brave soldier, and had made his mark on more than one battle-field; and he did not think it a great stretch of imagination to fancy himself qualified to fill the office in question.

"My lord," he said, "I already owe you much. You have but to command me."

"I think you are honest."

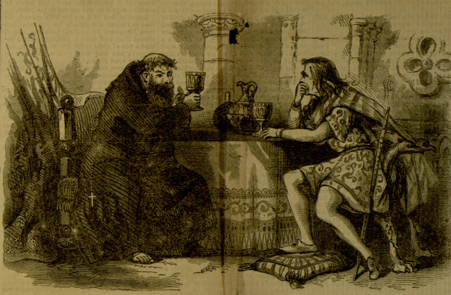
"Try me. If I fail you, my life is at your disposal."

Bertrand smiled as he replied:

"Your life is too valuable to be thrown carelessly away; so, I pray you, don't fail me. The time will come when I may place my correcting hand upon the most powerful noble in the realm; but at present I am forced to use caution and circumspection. I have enemies, my good man, and some of them are high in power. They are jealous and uneasy. They see me approaching the throne, and they fear for their safety in the future; and all plots aimed against me will involve my friends in the evil result. But my triumph is as certain as is the coming of another sun; and the only anxiety I have is to punish the evil-doers. You have been to Rennes with Sir Philip?"

"I have, my lord."

[Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1863, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.]



PRINCE BERTRAND SEEKS COUNSEL.

"You know why the captain was sent?"

"Yes."

"Were you within earshot when Sir Philip made known his business to the duke?"

"I was."

"Tell me what you heard."

Thamar repeated the conversation which had taken place between the duke and Sir Philip.

"Two things are evident," remarked Bertrand, after the guardsman had concluded: "Casimir has conceived a friendship for this bold mountaineer; and he also knows where those two old people are, and means to protect them."

"I should think so," replied Thamar.

"Perhaps you think something more," suggested the prince, as he noticed a peculiar expression upon the man's face, as though he had some opinions which he found it difficult to contain.

"I do think something more, my lord; but, after all, I may be telling you nothing. Perhaps you know more than I do."

"Explain yourself, Thamar."

"Does your highness know anything of this mountaineer beyond what appears upon the surface of affairs?"

"I only suspect," replied Bertrand, starting with sudden interest. "I suspect—aye, I know, that he cannot be the simple recluse he professes to be. But I know nothing. What do you know?"

"I cannot say that I know anything, my lord; though I think I have reason to suspect much. If you will listen to me, I will give you the result of my observations.

"In the first place," said the guardsman, laying his hands together, and speaking very carefully, "when I had heard of the exploits of this Conrad, I made up my mind that he was no ordinary man; or, at all events, that he was not a simple mountaineer. This conviction led me to examine him very closely when I saw him, and also to observe very narrowly all that transpired in relation to him. I gained a position near to the captain, and was able to hear much that was evidently not meant to be heard. Why was the proud duke so tender of the youth? Why did he allow him to walk in the garden with his daughter?"

"How!" cried the prince. "Allow him wandering alone with the Lady Rosaline!"

"Yes, my lord. I saw it with my own eyes. As we rode into the court, this Conrad and the Lady Rosaline were coming up from the garden."

"By the mass, this is friendship with a vengeance! And I have no doubt that the lady seemed pleased with the company."

"They were like two fondling doves, my lord."

Bertrand ground his teeth, and stamped his foot till the floor shook.

"Go on—go on," he said, as soon as he could control himself. "By the eternal gods! if I do not bring this plotting interloper down! But go on."

"Why was the proud duke so tender of the youth? Why did he allow him to walk in the garden with his daughter? I asked myself these questions, my lord, and I wanted an answer to them. It was not mere curiosity on my part. Far from it. Had I been alone in the matter, these things would not have led unto a bit of extra exertion. But I wished to serve my prince. I knew that Conrad du Nord was your enemy, and I meant, if possible, to know who and what he was. So I watched. I knew that the old hermit, Francesco, and the woman Marguerite, were not man and wife; and I judged that the youth was not their son. This brought me to the idea that there might be some mystery about his birth. Would the proud duke of Rennes suffer his only child to associate on terms of close intimacy with a man of low birth, especially when that man was young, brave, and handsome? It did not seem reasonable. And I continued to watch. By and by the young man came forth, clad in silk and velvet, and his presence was noble and commanding. I saw that Sir Philip watched him narrowly, and I soon made up my mind that the old captain suspected as much as I did, if not more. We had been on the road an hour or so, and I was riding close by Sir Philip's side. Ever and anon he would turn and study Conrad's features, and then mutt[illegible]elf. By and by his [illegible] sud[illegible]ed, and I [illegible] 'I know him now!' [illegible] he exclaimed, he rode back and spoke with the duke. He said, '*My lord, I have read that face.*' Casimir uttered an *exclamation of surprise.* Then the captain added: '*Yes, I am sure of it.*' '*And you know the youth?*' said the duke. Sir Philip answered: '*Nay; but I know whose features he bears. By heaven! the counterpart is exact.*' And then he was going on to speak the name, when the duke stopped him, and bade him not to give the secret to other ears. I could hear no more distinctly, though I was able to understand that Casimir assented to the captain's statement, but refused to give him further information. After this I saw much to confirm me in the belief that Conrad du Nord was of illustrious birth; that the duke knew all about it; and that Sir Philip had discovered just enough to fill him with amazement."

Bertand moved not until the guardsman had ceased speaking, and then he leaped from his chair and started across the room. His hands were clutched; his head bent; and his whole frame convulsed. At length he stopped, and gazed into his informant's face.

"Thamar, have you told me all that you know?"

"I think I have, my lord."

"You are a keen observer."

"I think I can read what is before me," said Thamar, modestly.

"Aye," added the prince; "and you can do more. If I am not mistaken, you are the man I need to help me. Adolphe and Goliath are both gone. Adolphe was a faithful friend; and if you will take his place, I shall not fear to trust you."

"Shall I leave the royal guard, my lord?"

"No. It will be better that you should remain there. If you have a mind to devote all your energies to my interests, that position will afford you numerous advantages."

"I am of your opinion; and you may trust me fully. You have but to make known your wishes, and I will obey, if it is within my power."

"I shall trust you, Thamar; and if you continue to serve me as you have begun, your reward shall be such as a noble might crave. I have one thing further to ask you: Did you learn where that old man and the woman were?"

"No, my lord."

"Or, did you hear anything that might lead you to mistrust where they were?"

"No. I only made up my mind that the duke knew all about them."

"Very well. You may go to your troop, and keep your eyes and ears open; and be ready to answer any signal I may send. If I want you I shall send Poins; so you will know what is wanted if you see him coming. Of course I need not caution you against speaking of the things about which we have been conversing."

"My lord, save in your presence, or at your order, I know nothing at all of the things whereof we have spoken."

"Good! That will do. I thank you now, Thamar; and for the future you may count upon something more."

The guardsman left the room; and when he was gone, the prince sank into a chair, and rested his brow upon his hands. He remained thus for some time, and then arose, and commenced to pace the floor.

"If I can only find out the duke's full force," he soliloquized, "I can meet him on even ground. But he must work smartly if he thinks to carry his point. He is my enemy, and will most assuredly tell to my father the sad story of my running away with his daughter. Bah! what of that! My poor old father will chide me, and there will be an end of that matter, so far as the king is concerned. But Casimir will remain my enemy; and I may count upon the hand of the Lady Rosaline as lost to me. But this new lover.—By the mass, I must look into that secret. I think I owe him something! He kills my best men; he robs me of my sweet prize; he draws his sword even against myself; [illegible] he bears away his old guardians in safety; and now he comes to court under the friendship of the powerful duke. By the gods! I must conquer him, or my self-respect is gone forever."

He sat down again, and after studying awhile, he slowly and thoughtfully said to himself, with his hands laid calculatingly together:

"I will not hurry to make any open demonstration against him. If it comes handy, he shall have a sword through his heart. But I will fathom his secret if I can. I will know who and what he is. 'Sblood! I am forced to own to myself that I fear the young rascal. He has the ring of danger in him. Already I have too many enemies in Brittany; and, if I would ever sit safely upon the throne, I must not have any more."

When he had thus spoken, he called in an attendant, whom he sent in quest of Poins. The man-at-arms soon presented himself.

"Poins, do you know where the cell of Father Jerome is?"

"Do you mean the old monk, my lord?"

"Yes."

"I can find him."

"I must see him this very night. He is my confessor, Poins; and I have something of the greatest weight upon my mind which I desire that he should know. Tell him to come to me; or, if that may not be, to send word where I may find him. I would see him as soon after dark as possible."

"I will tell him, my lord."

"Do so; and bring me his answer."

Shortly after Poins left, a messenger came from the king, requesting the attendance of the prince in the royal chamber.

Bertrand had expected this; and he was prepared. He found his father alone, with a look of trouble upon his face.

"My son, what is this I hear?"

"If I am to judge from the cloud upon your brow, my noble father, I should say that you had heard something that moved you unpleasantly."

"Aye, Bertrand,—it is indeed so. What have you been doing?"

"First, my father, tell me what has been said against me."

Casimir had told to Theobald the story of the wrong which had been done to his daughter; and of the parts which the prince and the young mountaineer had played in the affair; and this story the king now repeated to his son. The prince heard him quietly to the end, without apparent emotion of any kind, and then said:

"The duke has told you very near the truth, sire; though the impression left upon your mind is anything but fair. I did cause the Lady Rosaline to be carried away. But why? I meant to make her my wife. Had not you supposed that I was to have her hand?"

"Yes, my son."

"Aye,—and upon that event I had fixed my brightest hopes of life. But, sire, when I came to ask her plainly for her answer, she refused me. I knew that she was not herself. Was I to submit to such treatment! Was the house of Rennes to spit upon the son of the king! But, father, you waste your feelings in holding the impressions which the duke has given you. I confess that, so far as he has told you, he has not departed much from the truth; but he has not told you all. Where is Conrad du Nord?"

"He is with the duke."

"Has he left the city?"

"No. He remains to answer any further summons I may make."

"Very Well. Now listen to me, my father: Suppose I should tell you that this same Conrad du Nord was the accepted lover of the duke's daughter."

"How!" exclaimed the king, with a start.

"I wonder not that you are surprised, sire; but such is the case. And let me tell you something more: This Conrad du Nord is an unknown, nameless adventurer. The duke has picked him up, and means to marry him to his daughter. Have you seen the youth?"

"No,—not yet," replied the king.

"If you do see him, you will behold a young man of bold, commanding presence, such as nature gives to those who are her favorites. With such a tool Casimir thinks to work some mischief. Suppose his cousin of Anjou should join him in some plot against the throne!"

"But—John of Anjou is my friend."

"Aye,—but not mine. I tell you, my father, there is something deep in all this."

The poor old king trembled from head to foot. He forgot entirely the business upon which he had called his son, this new whisper having filled his soul with alarm. Bertrand knew his weaknesses, and knew just how to play upon them.

"I do not think Casimir would plot against me."

"Not if the plotting could place his blood upon the throne?"

"My son!"

"Courage, sire. Leave this in my hands. I was just commencing the work of investigation when your messenger found me. I may be in error. I hope I am. But I will not be long in error. Will you give me three days in which to sift this matter?"

The king was weak, and the prince was strong; and the quaking old monarch was easily persuaded to give up to his son.

"Until you hear from me again upon this matter," suggested Bertrand, "you had better not suffer the duke to approach you. However, in this you will act your own pleasure. I have only to ask emphatically that you will be careful how you trust him."

"I shall not see him," replied Theobald, with a shiver. "I. he can do me wrong, I do not wish to see him; and if he is truly my friend, he will forgive me when he knows all. I shall not see him until I hear from you again."

Bertrand went away with a look of triumph upon his face.

By and by the page brought up bread and goat's milk for supper. The king called his dog, and fed him; and when, at the end of half an hour, the animal skipped as gaily as ever, the poor old man sat down to his frugal repast!

CHAPTER XVII.

WEAVING THE NET.

It was nearly dark when the prince returned to his own apartments, and he found Poins there waiting for him, with the information that Father Jerome would come to the palace at nine o'clock. Bertrand eat his supper, and then went out and gave some directions to his men-at-arms. At the appointed hour the monk arrived.

Jerome was a member of the order of St. Benedict; a man somewhere near seventy years of age; of medium height, and tending to corpulency. It is not certain that all the old monks of that period were corpulent; nor can we swear that Father Jerome was a free liver; but we must put him down as we find him,—and we find him blessed with a marked rotundity of body. The superabundance of flesh may have been begotten of the most simple and austere diet; and, for ought we know to the contrary, wine may have been a stranger to his lips until this present evening; but it was to be a stranger no longer; for one of the first offerings of the prince's hospitality was wine, and Father Jerome drank a full measure of it—drank it as though he was used to it. The monk had a small, dark, keen eye; a nose rather broad; a large mouth, with lips thicker than a sculptor would put upon the face of a hero; and when he drank his wine he smacked his lips, and winked his bright little eye.

"Father Jerome," said the prince, "I know you thoroughly."

The Benedictine sipped from his second measure of wine, and winked again.

"I suppose you think you know me?" pursued Bertrand.

"Thou art Bertrand, the son of Theobald," answered the monk, with mock gravity.

"And do you not believe that I shall be king of Brittany?"

"Aye—verily I do."

"The chances are, good father, that I shall be king; and when I am king, I mean to hold the sceptre in my own hand."

"You will have that right, my son."

"And be sure I shall exercise it."

"You would not be king if you did not."

"You are right."

The prince arose and went to the door, and when he came back he said:

"I know you, Father Jerome; and I am going to be perfectly frank with you. I want you to help me; and in return, whenever you wish it, I will help you."

"That is frank and fair, my son," returned the monk.

"Perhaps," pursued the prince, who felt sure that he knew his man, "there may be something even now in view that you would like. If you help me, I shall pay you; and, if we can agree upon the terms, the price might be as well fixed now as at any time. I can tell you exactly what I wish you to do for me. Can you do the same?"

The Benedictine smiled, and winked, and rubbed his hands.

"There is one thing I should like very much," he said.

"What is it?"

"I should like to be Abbott of Saint Auban."

"Father Jerome, help me in my present need, and when I am king you shall be Abbott of Saint Auban."

"Do you promise that?" cried the monk, with a start of glad surprise.

"I do, upon my knightly word."

"My lord, I will help you if I can. We understand each other."

There was no mistaking the meaning of the Benedictine. He wished to be Abbott of Saint

Auban; and to reach that position he would do anything which the prince would dare to plan.

"What am I to do?" he asked, after the prince had gone once more to the door and returned.

"I will tell you in as direct a manner as possible," said Bertrand, drawing his chair up in front of his visitor. Have you yet heard of the young mountaineer called Conrad du Nord?"

"No, my son."

"Then I must tell you of him. He has been reared in the Nord Mountains, by an old woman named Marguerite, who has passed for his mother. Close by their cot, in a mountain cave, has lived an old man of the name of Francesco, who has passed for a hermit, and who has been the youth's tutor. This Francesco, it now seems, was once a soldier, and he has made his pupil one of the best swordsmen in Brittany. Circumstances which I need not now stop to relate have brought this youth across my path, and it is not impossible that he may become dangerous to me. The same circumstances which brought him across my path introduced him to the Duke of Rennes; and the duke has conceived a wonderful friendship for him. There is some mystery about this Conrad's parentage; and I think the duke has some clue. In fact, I know it must be so. Casimir has been heard to speak words which directly proved it. And, furthermore, he has allowed the adventurer to make love to his daughter."

"Are you sure of all that you have told me?" asked Jerome.

"Yes, father."

"Even to the love affair between this youth and the Lady Rosaline?"

"Yes."

"How old is this Conrad du Nord?"

"I should think not far from my own age; younger, if anything."

"Has any one else seen him, besides the duke, to be struck by his appearance?"

"Yes. Sir Philip de Savenay."

"And what has Sir Philip discovered?"

"He has discovered that the youth's features are remarkably like those of some friend whom he knew years ago."

"How looks the hero?"

"He is tall and well-formed; with mighty power of limb; he has light hair, and large, lustrous eyes; and his presence is bold and commanding."

"Can you tell me anything more?"

"I can think of nothing."

"Where is the youth now?"

"In Vannes. The duke has brought him hither."

The monk was deeply interested. He closed his eyes, and pressed his fingers upon his brow.

"My son," he at length said, "I think you have hit upon some one who can help you. Somewhere over a score of years ago—I cannot now tell exactly the time—a child disappeared from Vannes. The circumstances which you have related would seem exactly to apply to the child I speak of. If I am right, the duke must be acting very strangely—he must be laboring under an error."

"What is it?" asked Bertrand, eagerly. "What was this child?"

The monk seemed not to notice the question. He remained some time in deep thought, and then said, as though he had not been disturbed:

"I do not think I am mistaken. But I must see this woman—this Marguerite—of whom you have spoken. Where is she?"

"I cannot tell you. I think, however, that she is somewhere near Rennes."

"What makes you think so?"

"Both she and the old hermit went to Rennes with their protégé; the youth remained and they went on."

The monk nodded his head half a dozen times, and finally said:

"I can tell you where to look for them. *They* are at the Abbey of Saint Aubin. My word for it, you will find the woman there, if you do not find the man. Old Dagobert, the abbott, is her uncle. Bring her to me, and I think the mystery may be readily solved."

"But, good father, you have not told me what you have discovered. I am all anxiety. Who was the child you speak of?"

The Benedictine shook his head.

"My son, you must not press me too closely. The secret of that child's life is, for the present, under the key of my religious oath. Let Marguerite be summoned; and, if it is proved that this child and Conrad du Nord are one and the same person; and if it be also proved that the child has grown up to be the enemy of our prince, then I will let out the secret and save you."

"Save me?"

"Aye—or serve you, as you please; for, if it be as I think it is, your enemy is rushing on to his own destruction. One word of mine will blast him forever."

"Are you speaking truly?" demanded the prince, grasping the monk arm.

"My words are words of solemn truth," replied Jerome, earnestly.

"And could this fellow wield any power in Brittany if he gained the station to which he was born?"

"Not alone. Designing men might make a tool of him—that is all."

"It is as I thought."

"But," pursued the monk, "if you are judicious, you have nothing to fear. Bring the old woman, Marguerite, as soon as you can."

"How is it with the man—Francesco?"

"I would rather trust the woman. She will not lie. The man is an old soldier, and he might trifle with us. Bring the woman alone if you can."

The Benedictine had arisen to go, but Bertrand stopped him.

"There is one thing, good father, I wish to understand more fully. You are not sure that the child of whom you speak——"

"I am not sure that the child lives," answered Jerome, without waiting for the conclusion of the question.

"And if this mountaineer should not prove to be the same——"

"My learning who he is might not help you."

"One thing further: If Conrad du Nord is not that child, can there be any possible danger to me through him?"

"Yes," replied the monk, emphatically. "He may prove to be a most powerful enemy It is not impossible that the duke may hold a suspicion of some truth which I cannot reach. If such should prove to be the case, you may have something to contend with; and I may never gain the mitre and crozier of Saint Auban. But bring the woman. Let us question her first."

"Holy father——"

"No more, my son. I know what you would ask; and I will answer you without putting you to the trouble of framing speech. The path is before you; a tree has blown across the way. We will remove the obstacle if we can. Should it prove too heavy for that, you must cut your way through it!"

"Thank you, father."

"You are not indebted to me yet. Wait. When you have found the woman send for me."

The monk drank another measure of wine, and then departed; and as he went out, Poins came in.

"Poins," cried the prince, "who of all my followers is best fitted to take Adolphe's place?"

"I should say, my lord, that you have a man in your employ who is better than Adolphe ever was. I mean Marius."

"By my life, I believe you are right. Why have I never thought of him before? Send him to me at once."

Poins went out, and ere long afterwards Marius presented himself. He was a middle-aged man; of medium size; with a mild expression upon his well-cut features; and very quiet and modest in deportment. If Bertrand had not seen this man strike down strong foemen in battle, he would have been inclined to doubt his energy.

"Marius, have you heard the story of Conrad du Nord?

"I have, my lord, in part."

"Have you heard mention made of Marguerite and Francesco?"

"Do you mean the two old people whom Bernardo was sent to apprehend?"

"The same."

"I have heard of them."

"Do you know where the Abbey of Saint Aubin is?"

"I know it very well, my lord. I was reared between Saint Aubin and Rennes."

"Good!—Now mark me: I think Francesco and Marguerite are at the abbey. I want to see Marguerite in this very room as quickly as possible."

"And Francesco?"

"I want nothing to do with him at present. The woman must be brought alone, and privately."

"My lord, if she is at the abbey, and is well, I will bring her to you."

"When can you do it?"

"The distance to Saint Aubin is a good thirty leagues," said Marius, calculatingly. "I can change horses at least five times. Ten hours will take me there, with something to spare. If I start soon I can reach the abbey early on the morrow. A few hours rest, and I shall be ready for work. Of course we must return more slowly, if we have the woman; but I think I may safely promise to be here sometime during the day after to-morrow."

"How many men do you want?"

"Not more than three."

"Will you select them?"

"Yes."

"Then go and do so; and while the horses are being prepared, do you come back here. I would speak with you again."

In less than half an hour Marius came back, and reported that he was ready to set out. The prince gave him more particular instructions, and finally dismissed him upon his mission.

"Now, Poins, I have one more arrangement to make. I want half-a-dozen of the most daring and stout-armed of my retainers. I want men who fear nothing, and who would march through fire for a fitting object. Can you bring me such?"

"I think I can."

"Go and find them, and bring them back with you; and, as you go out, send Thamar to me."

The factotum left the room, and shortly afterwards Thamar entered.

"My good Thamar, what have you discovered new?"

"Nothing, my lord; only I am more than ever convinced that what I have told you is true."

"Where is Conrad du Nord?"

"He is with the duke, at his residence by the sea-shore."

"Then they mean to reside there while they stop in Vannes?"

"It is probable."

Thamar was dismissed with thanks, and with instructions to keep his watch.

In half an hour Poins returned, followed by six stout, dark-featured fellows, who, from their uniforms, appeared to be members of the 'prince's legion.' They bowed respectfully, and then stood back, with their left hands resting upon the pommels of their swords, as though they were ready for anything. Bertrand gazed at them, and the significant nod of his head seemed to indicate that he was satisfied.

"These are all true men, my lord," said Poins.

"Who speaks for them?" asked the prince.

"I can do so," replied one of the number, stepping forward a pace. "Whatever I promise, my lord, you may consider as promised by the six."

"I think your name is Pluton?"

"It is, my lord."

"Do you know the young man called Conrad du Nord?"

"I saw him, this afternoon, go away with Casimir of Rennes."

"The very same. He is in my way."

Pluton dropped his hand upon his sword-hilt, and bowed.

"The fellow must not be assassinated outright," pursued the prince. "There must be some shadow of provocation. I would give a hundred crowns for a hole through his body, provided that hole was sufficient to let his life out."

"I understand you, my lord."

"But, remember,—it must look like a quarrel."

"It shall be so. And if the duke discovers us——"

"You had better leave no track for discoverers. However, if you do as I have said, and complaint is entered against you, I will stand between you and harm."

"I merely asked the question, my lord, in order that my companions might not think me forgetful; but I do not intend that the work shall be unnecessarily exposed. We will report in due time."

When these workmen had gone, the prince retired to his bed-chamber, feeling that he had accomplished enough for one day.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW PLUTON SUCCEEDED.

A warm, pleasant afternoon. Casimir of Rennes and Conrad were walking upon the sea-shore.

"Patience, my dear boy. I am sure that all will come out well. If I were not confident, I should not hold out the light as I do. Rosaline will come to-morrow; and I think that by the day after we shall be ready to proceed with our investigation."

"I try to be patient," replied Conrad; "and I try to bear up hopefully. Still I am as one groping in the dark."

"Not exactly in the dark."

"Then it is worse, my lord."

"How can that be?"

"If I am not like one in the dark, I am like one in a place of uncertain light. Ah, if the bubble should burst—if the flash should fade away—the gloom of my life would be cold and cheerless. I should then wish that I had never seen the face of the angel!"

"Hush, my boy. There is no need of such reflections."

"How can I avoid them? There are a thousand chances against me. My hopes all hang upon the possibility that my birth may be proved to have been a noble one. Should that fail——"

"Should that fail, my son, I will still bid you hope. What more can you ask?"

"I would ask this," cried Conrad, energetically: "I would ask that Rosaline shall decide my fate. Dare you promise me that?"

The duke hesitated; but at length he said:

"I am almost tempted to give you the promise. However, let us wait until Rosaline comes. I will speak with her. As God lives, I mean to bless you if I can; and if I hesitate about making such a promise, it is because I have not the right to do it."

At this juncture a servant approached, and informed the duke that he was wanted at the house. A messenger from Rennes had arrived.

"Come," said Casimir, "laying his hand upon the youth's arm, "let us go and hear the news from the castle. Cheer up, and look forward with courage."

"I will follow you, my lord."

"You had better not wander here alone."

"I will not remain long behind you. Let me reflect a little."

The duke went away with his servant, and Conrad remained upon the sea-shore. He did not mean to stop long. He meant to follow slowly back, that he might have an opportunity of communing with his own thoughts. But when once engaged with the reflections that came crowding upon him, he forgot the house, and wandered away, with his head bowed, and his arms folded upon his breast.

"Would to heaven that I could see the end of this!" he murmured, as he slowly wended his way among the rocks. "All may be as bright as the duke foretells; but the decrees of fate are not in his hands. He knows not what may transpire to shatter the fabric upon which my hopes are founded. O my God! I have a fear which I shrink from whispering, even to myself. If my birth was honorable, why was it hidden so darkly! If I had been the child of the poorest peasant in the realm, so that I had been honorably begotten, there would have been no need of such mystery. O! if such a bolt should come crashing upon me, I shall curse the hour that opened my senses to life! Do not tell me that such thought is foolish; for, by the angel of fate, my blood runs legitimately thither. And, if the dark brand of an old shame is laid upon me, how shall Rosaline regard me! Ah, my lord duke, I can understand why you hesitate in your promise. You can see that the bursting of the thunderbolt is not impossible!"

Conrad had reached an open space close by the water's edge, where the sand lay hard and smooth, when he was interrupted in his reflections by the appearance of a stout man-at-arms, who seemed to have come from behind some of the neighboring rocks. Our hero would have turned and retraced his steps, but the stranger stopped him.

"How now, my youngman. Don't fly away from me."

Conrad could not detemine whether the fellow was insolent, or wither he was simply bold and frank.

"I am not flying, sir," he said, casting a searching glance over the soldier.

"You have been enjoying very excellent company."

"Ah—do you think so"

"I merely judge from he earnest manner in which you were conversing. Zounds! I expected, when I heard you voice, to find a small party of very excited men"

Conrad colored and bit his lip. He did not like the manner of the fellow. There was something grossly familiar and bantering in his look and tone.

"He takes me for some favored friend of the duke's," he said to himself, "and he is jealous of what he considers my good fortune." Then he said aloud:

"You will excuse me, sir; I am in haste."

"Hold, one moment, if you please. Do not give a friend the cold shoulder in that fashion. Mercy! one [illegible] you proud if he did not know [illegible] came of."

Conrad's [illegible] would you insult me?"

"Good mercy, no. I pray you, young sir, don't think of such a thing. Ha, ha—an insult is a dangerous thing. In the section I came from an insult is the signal for sword-drawing; and surely I should be a brute to urge you to draw your sword against an old soldier like myself. What a ridiculous thing it would be."

"It might be a very foolish thing," said our hero, entirely unable to comprehend what the fellow was driving at.

"So it would," retorted the man-at-arms, with a coarse laugh. "I should be directly accused of murder."

"I thought the laws of Britany were not so strict as that."

"O, bless you—they are very strict about killing unoffending citizens."

"I do not discover your point, sir."

"Don't you? I think it is plain enough."

"Perhaps you will enlighten me."

"With pleasure. If I have a battle with a man of my own station, his life is mine if he voluntarily places it at the point of my sword. But if I draw my sword upon a child, or against one who is wholly unable to defend himself, then the law will not hold me guiltless. Do you understand?"

"I understand that you are trifling."

"How?"

"I think you are trifling with me. If you are not, I will thank you to leave me to myself."

"Mercy! Cannot one claim a passing word of good cheer without giving offence? Look to it, my fair young master, or I may think that you mean to insult me."

"If you pass on I shall surely not insult you."

"And if I stay—would you dare to insult me then?"

Conrad turned, and would have walked away; but the interloper stepped quickly forward, and laid his hand upon his arm.

"Perhaps you mean this for an insult."

"What?"

"This cool turning away from me without answering my question."

"'Sblood!" cried our hero, shaking the hand from his arm, and looking into the fellow's face, "you are approaching dangerously near to me. Who are you? I never saw you before, and I care not to see you again. I select my own companions, and admit whom I please to my counsel. Leave me."

"Bah! you are hot-headed, my boy. I shall have to give you a lesson in manners."

"Beware that I do not give you a lesson of a sterner character," said Conrad, shutting his teeth tightly together.

"Aha!—are you there? Do you mean that you would cross swords with me?"

There could be no more doubt touching the fellow's character and intentions. His uniform was of the prince's legion; and he looked fit for plottings and killings.

"Look ye," said Conrad, speaking almost in a whisper, "if you seek a quarrel with me, you are in dangerous business. You find me alone, and engaged with my own thoughts. Let me pass on and all may be well. I would have no further words with you."

"But I would have further words with you!" exclaimed the ruffian, again seizing the youth by the arm, and twirling him around. "By Saint Michael! I am not to be insulted thus, even though you be a favorite of some proud noble! We'll see if your sword is as nimble as your tongue. If you are not a coward, defend yourself!"

The young mountaineer made no effort to contain himself further. He drew his sword, and placed himself on his guard. The man-at-arms' object was now very evident; for the ready manner in which he made the attack showed that such had been his plan from the first. Conrad saw it all, and he was convinced that the prince was at the bottom of the scheme.

"Remember," said the assailant, as he threw his left hand behind him, "this is no child's play. The sand at our feet is thirsty for blood."

"Be it so," responded Conrad.

The swords were crossed; and for some moments the parries were simply of preparation. Directly, however, the soldier made a furious lunge, and the combattants fairly changed places.

"'Sdeath! your sword is a stout one."

"It is sharp, too," returned Conrad, coolly and significantly.

"Mine is not blunt," said the man-at-arms, as he made two or three rapid passes. But he very soon lost his confident air, and the look of easy assurance which had rested upon his face gave place to an expression of earnest concern. He found the point of the opposing sword very difficult to meet, and its gyrations and thrusts were becoming painfully perplexing. He tried all his feints, and they failed. Then he tried the strength of his opponent's wrist; and that trial was his last. His sword became hopelessly entangled, and he cried out for help. He did not ask for mercy at the hands of his antagonist; but he called for help, as though he had friends at hand. But he had delayed too long to save himself. The point of his own sword was borne down till it touched the sand; and before he could recover it he was pierced to the heart.

But what had that cry for help meant? As soon as Conrad had shaken the sinking ruffian from his sword he started back and looked around him; and he saw, coming up from behind a pile of great rocks, five armed men, clad in garbs like that worn by him who now lay bleeding upon the sand.

"How now, assassin!" exclaimed their leader, rushing forward with his sword drawn. "By the gods! you shall pay for this!"

Conrad understood the whole plot, as though it had been told to him by the man who had framed it. He knew that these were emissaries of the prince, and that his life was wanted. Against those five stout men-at-arms he could not hope successfully to contend; but he was determined to sell his life as dearly as possible.

Close behind him were two huge rocks, with a space between them sufficient for his standing. This position he gained as quickly as possible, and then turned upon the approaching foe.

"Hold, sirs!" he cried, planting himself firmly on his guard. "You have no cause for warring against me."

"Say ye so," returned the leader of the gang, who was none other than Pluton. "Have you not slain our comrade?"

"Down with him!" yelled a powerful fellow, who stood by Pluton's side. "By Saint Paul! he cannot break down my blade. Let me get at him!"

The leader moved a step away, and allowed the eager man to rush on. It was plainly seen that but one man could engage the youth at the same time, and Pluton seemed willing that his stout follower should make the attempt.

Conrad was not at all moved by the coming of this dashing, daring fellow. The rascal was huge of frame, and must have possessed immense strength; but he came with too much confidence, as though simple brute force was to accomplish his purpose. He entered the pass between the two rocks; and, with a roar of vengeance, not unlike the bellowing of a bull, he raised his sword and aimed a furious blow at the youth's head. Conrad smiled as he saw the direction of the ponderous blade; for, upon the first instant, he knew that the giant was at his mercy. A very slight movement on his part turned the furiously driven point against the rock; and from that moment he led the attack. The ruffian was startled; then bewildered; and then blinded; but before he could withdraw from the trap into which he had so eagerly plunged, the trenchant blade of the mountaineer had cut the thread of his life, and he fell backward at the entrance of the passage.

Pluton by this time discovered that the man whom the prince so much feared was not an enemy to be despised by anybody; and before he permitted another attack, he stopped to make a better plan.

"We have him now," he cried, moving back a pace, and pointing to an open way towards the shore. "Pierre and Ludovic, do you go around there, and attack the rascal in the rear. By the mass! we have him now in his own trap."

Conrad was startled when he heard this; for surely his fate was sealed if the murderous plan should be carried out. Against enemies upon both hands, in such a place as that, it would be impossible to contend. He was upon the point of rushing out to attack the two in front before the others could get around to the rear of the rocks, when a new party appeared upon the scene.

"Halloa!" cried a voice. "What is all this?"

Pluton turned and beheld the captain of the ducal guard, at the head of a dozen men. He recognized the rich uniform in a moment, and he knew that his own safety would be jeoparded if he stopped for further explanation. So he gave the word to his companion, and ran with all possible speed down by the shore, where the other two of his men had just disappeared; and in a very few moments they were all out of sight among the rocks.

Nicolas, for he it was, advanced to meet our hero, who very quickly explained what had transpired.

"Never mind," said the captain, as the idea of pursuing the rascals presented itself. "Let them go. We know from whom they came; and we shall know better how to manage for the future. The duke was right in sending me down here."

"Did he send you?"

"Yes. I met him at the garden gate. He was going in, and I was going out. He said he had left you alone down by the sea, and told me to come down and keep you company. And, by my life, I think I arrived just in season. The murderous rascals had planned a sure thing."

"I don't know," said Conrad, smiling.

"How? Do you imagine you could have withstood such odds? Think of it: While those in front held your point, those in the rear would simply have run their sword straight through your body."

"Ah, my good captain, I should not have given them that opportunity. When I saw those two who were to have attacked me in the rear disappear, I had but one chance left, so far as my own endeavors were concerned; and that chance I was about to try when you appeared. I meant to rush out upon the two who remained in front, and press them with all my might, hoping to overcome them before the others could come to their assistance. However, I am very thankful that you saved me from the ordeal, for I might have failed."

"By the Holy Cross!" cried Nicolas, smiting his breast, "I almost wish I had left you to the work; for, upon my soul, I think you would have conquered them."

"It is better as it is," said Conrad. "I have shed blood enough."

"By Saint Michael! if the prince follows you much more, his [illegible] legion will be materially thinned. But come—let us go to the house. We will send down some of the servants to take care of these dead men."

"There has been an arrival from Rennes?" remarked our hero, as they walked along. He intended to have spoken very unconcernedly; but there was a strange flutter in his voice.

"Yes," replied Nicolas; "an advance courier from the train of the Lady Rosaline."

"Ah; is she on her way to this place?"

"Yes. She has hurried, it seems. She was lonesome at the castle, after her father had gone—very lonesome."

The captain looked into Conrad's face as he spoke, and then added:

"She will be here this evening—at least two days earlier than we had calculated upon."

The stout officer would have spoken further, but his companion had become suddenly thoughtful and abstracted, and he chose not to disturb the current of his reflections.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

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THE TRIAL OF BAXTER.

The trial of Baxter, the celebrated Non-conformist, supplies an admirable specimen of the fashion in which a criminal case was conducted under these respectable auspices in the year 1685. When the trial came on, a crowd of those who loved and honored Baxter filled the court. Two whig barristers of great note, Pollexfen and Wallop, appeared for the defendant. Pollexfen had scarce began his address to the jury, when the chief justice broke forth: "Pollexfen, I know you well. I will set a mark upon you. You are the patron of the faction. This is an old rogue, a schismatical knave, a hypocritical villain. He hates the Liturgy. He would have nothing but long-winded cant without book;" and then his lordship turned up his eyes, clasped his hands, and began to sing through his nose, in imitation of what he supposed to be Baxter's style of praying—"Lord, we are thy people, thy peculiar people, thy dear people." Pollexfen gently reminded the court that his late majesty had thought Baxter deserving of a bishopric. "And what ailed the old blockhead, then," cried Jeffreys, "that he did not take it?" His fury now rose to madness. He called Baxter a dog, and swore that it would be no more than justice to whip such a villain through the whole city. Baxter himself attempted to put in a word; but the chief justice drowned all expostulation in a torrent of ribaldry and invective, mingled with scraps of Hudibras. "My lord," said the old man, "I have been much blamed by Dissenters for speaking respectfully of bishops." "Baxter for bishops," cried the judge, "that's a merry conceit, indeed! I know what you mean by bishops; rascals, like yourself, Kidderminster bishops, faction Presbyterians." Again Baxter essayed to speak, and again Jeffreys bellowed: "Richard, Richard, dost thou think we will let thee poison the court? Richard, thou art an old knave. Thou hast written books enough to load a cart, and every book as full of sedition as an egg is full of meat. By the grace of God, I'll look after thee. I see a great many of your brotherhood waiting to know what will befall their mighty don. But by the grace of God Almighty, I will crush you all!" The noise of weeping was heard from some of those who surrounded Baxter. "Snivelling calves!" said the judge.

◆

ORIGIN OF THE PHRASE "BY HOOK OR BY CROOK."

The destruction caused by the Fire of London, A. D. 1666, during which some 13,200 houses, etc., were burnt down, in very many cases obliterated all the boundary-marks requisite to determine the extent of land, and even the very sites occupied by buildings, previously to this terrible visitation. When the rubbish was removed, and the land cleared, the disputes and entangled claims of those whose houses had been destroyed, both as to the position and extent of their property, promised not only interminable occupation to the courts of law, but made the far more serious evil of delaying the rebuilding of the city, until these disputes were settled, inevitable. Impelled by the necessity of coming to a more speedy settlement of their respective claims than could be hoped for from legal process, it was determined that the claims and interests of all persons concerned should be referred to the judgment and decision of two of the most experienced land-surveyors of that day,—men who had been thoroughly acquainted with London previously to the fire; and in order to escape from the numerous and vast evils which mere delay must occasion, that the decision of these two arbitrators should be final and binding. The surveyors appointed to determine the rights of the various claimants were Mr. Hook and Mr. Crook, who, by the justice of their decisions, gave general satisfaction to the interested parties, and by their speedy determination of the different claims, permitted the rebuilding of the city to proceed without the least delay. Hence arose the saying above quoted, usually applied to the extrication of persons or things from a difficulty.

◆

A GOOD MAN'S WISH.

"I freely confess to you," said Dr. Sharp, "that I would rather, when I am laid in the grave, some one in his manhood would stand over me and say, 'There lies one who was a real friend to me, and privately warned me of the dangers of the young; no one knew it, but he aided me in the time of need. I owe what I am to him.' Or I would rather have some widow, with choking utterance, telling her children, 'There is your friend and mine. He visited me in my affliction, and found you, my son, an employer, and you, my daughter, a happy home in a virtuous family.' I say I would rather that such persons should stand at my grave, than to have erected over it the most beautiful sculptured monument of marble. The heart's broken utterance of reflections of past kindness, and the tears of grateful memory shed upon the grave, are more valuable, in my estimation, than the most costly cenotaph ever reared."

◆

THE WORLD AND CHANCE.

How often might a man, after he had jumbled a set of letters in a bag, fling them out upon the ground before they would fall into an exact poem, yea, or so much as make a good discourse in prose. And may not a little book be as easily made by chance as this great volume of the world? How long might a man be sprinkling colors upon canvass with a careless hand before they could happen to make the exact picture of a man? And is man easier made by chance than his picture? How long might twenty thousand blind men, which should be sent out from several remote places in our country, wander up and down before the would meet upon the banks of the Rappahannock and fall into rank and file in the exact order of an army? And yet this is more easy to be imagined than how the innumerable blind parts of matter should rendezvous themselves into a world.

◆

—Men of proud and passionate tempers, like those who have pestilential diseases, have only this advantage over their defects, that though they be not guilty of valor, yet they cause all the world to fly from them.

YOU AND I.

BY FINLEY JOHNSON.

Hope's sun on you is shining bright,
You raise your thoughts above,
You now are dreaming your first dream
Of pure and holy love.
But I—ah, I—but gaze upon
The sad, eventful past;
I, too, have dreamed a dream of love,
But, ah, *it was the last.*

You watch for one who yet will tread
The path of life with you,
And future joys and golden dreams
Rise up before your view.
But I, yes I, shall never more
Meet her I loved so well;
Her lips shall ne'er again press mine,
Death rung her funeral knell.

Your steps are midst a flowery path,
Where'er in life you go;
Your rainbow shines through *drops of hope,*
And mine through *drops of wo.*
You mingle in the festive scenes
Of fashion and of mirth,
While I, a lone and wretched man,
In anguish walk the earth.

Your dreams at night are beautiful,
And when the day returns,
Each vision and their memories
Within your bosom burns;
But I, alas, such visions have,
Which make me life deplore,
I feel, I know that I have woke,
To dream, alas! no more.

Your soul is full of future hopes,
Which yet are all untried;
Mine is a sepulchre of those
Which bloomed awhile, *then died.*
The wings of Faith, and Trust, and Love,
Are o'er your pathway spread,
While, like the fruit of the Dead Sea,
Mine lay in ashes—*dead.*

REVOLUTIONARY HEROISM.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

Men have been immortalized for dying on the battle-field in some desperate action where their personal valor became conspicuous and changed an apparent defeat into an important victory, and though their courage was deserving of all the praise it received, yet the glorious meed of lasting fame was no more their due than that of thousands who have gone down to an unhonored grave without a record of a single one of their many heroic deeds and noble self-sacrifices. It takes more true courage for a fond and loving husband, father, son, or brother, actuated only by a high sense of duty to his country, to tear himself from the embrace of a weeping wife, child, mother, or sister, and go forth to the tented field, than it does to charge a belching battery amid the exciting roar and carnage of battle.

And what of the courage and sacrifice of the loving wife and mother, who, with the same high sense of duty, bids him she idolizes, who is all the world to her, go forth to peril his precious life, and leave her to weep and mourn for him as one she may never look upon again—to pass long, weary days of agonizing suspense, and nights of starting, feverish sleep—perhaps, too, to struggle with poverty, and suffer with sickness and privation, or see those suffer, because of his absence, whose lives are dearer to her than her own? What of her courage and self-sacrifice, we say? He has gone to the stirring life of the camp, the foray and the battle-field, where the daily excitements of a soldier's life may give some relief to his aching heart, by diverting his thoughts from what he has left behind; but she is left alone with her sorrow, to suffer in secret, and struggle on in an almost unsympathizing, pitiless world. Who notes and praises her courage? What reward has she for her great sacrifice, save that her conscience tells her she has nobly done her duty? He may fall, and the awful intelligence reach her that he sleeps in a soldier's grave, never to be seen and greeted by her again this side the dark Valley of Death; and what has she to recompense her for this loving life gone out, except the reflection that he gave his all to his country and she sanctioned the noble deed?—no glory, no fame, no surrounding applause, to lighten the darkness of desolation—nothing but the secret conviction that the sacrifice was needful and Heaven approves.

This was the heroism of the men and women of the Revolution; this is the heroism of the men and women of to-day; and those who still live and suffer, should console themselves with the certainty that Eternal Justice does not sleep and that the reward of virtue will be meted out to them in eternity if not in time.

But the heroism of the women of the Revolution was not always exhibited in a passive manner. Besides having to bear the loss of their supporters—to struggle on in grief and poverty, thankful if they could keep a roof over their heads and starvation from their doors—they were sometimes compelled to *act* in a manner for which they were not fitted by either nature or education—to handle the deadly weapons of the sterner sex, and defend themselves against midnight robbers and murderers.

Whenever an invading army is encamped in the country of an enemy, the inhabitants for miles around are never secure in either property or life. Videttes, reconnoitering and foraging parties, are more or less abroad in every direction, to say nothing of a prowling set of thieves and murderers, who follow an army as wolves do the hunter, or jackals the lion, to pounce upon whatever they can with impunity. During the war of the Revolution, these villainous marauders became very troublesome in some sections of the country, and the unprotected citizens, between the lines of the two armies, often suffered terribly in life and property. In many cases the head of the family being away with the army, the only inmates of the dwelling were one or more women, with perhaps a few children, too young to afford their mother any assistance in the event of an attack; and such defenceless places the cowardly marauders delighted to assail, plunder and burn in the dead of night, not unfrequently murdering in cold blood the entire household, or adding such foul deeds to their black list of crimes as we care not to relate.

In a rather lonely part of the country, a few miles northward from Philadelphia, at the time the British took possession of the city, there stood a solitary dwelling, occupied by a Mrs. Parker, a maiden sister older than herself, and two children of tender years, the husband and father being in the army under General Washington. The small farm, owned by her husband, was all Mrs. Parker had to depend on for a living; and this, during his absence, was carried on by herself and sister, both working in the fields at plowing, planting and hoeing, and only getting a man's help for a few days in haying. Neither Mrs. Parker, nor her sister, Miss Price, was at all delicate in person or strength—but, on the contrary, quite strong and robust—and their out-door labors, of course, increased their masculineness in some degree. Nor were they as timid as the greater portion of their sex; but when they found the enemy near them, and heard of the depredations and barbarities of here and there a roving band of villains, they clinched their hands, set their teeth hard, and said it was well the scoundrels did not have two such persons as themselves to deal with. It might naturally have been asked what two women—ay, or for that matter, two men either—could do to protect themselves against a party of ten or twenty armed desperadoes; but, as we could answer the question to-day by telling what they did do under just such circumstances, we will proceed to state the facts that we wish to make known.

As one means of protection, and also to destroy any game, troublesome or otherwise, that might chance in their way, a loaded rifle was always kept in the house, and this weapon both of the sisters had learned to handle with nearly as much skill as the master of the dwelling himself. In order, too, that there might never be any lack of ammunition, Parker, before enlisting for the war, had purchased a keg of powder in the city, and stored it in the cellar, in a little cell prepared expressly for it, where it was kept perfectly dry, and with little or no danger to the inmates.

Now, one dark night, at a late hour, the sisters were aroused from sleep by a rapid succession of thundering blows upon one of the outer doors of their dwelling, and they also heard several gruff voices ripping out the most blasphemous oaths and demanding instant admittance.

"Sally," said Mrs. Parker, starting up in bed, "it's them cutthroats and robbers, come to try their hand on us."

"Just so, Nancy," replied Miss Price, springing out of bed and hurrying on some of her clothes, "and you know what we always said we'd do in case they did come."

"It's awful though, aint it?" returned the other, in a tone of considerable alarm and dismay, as she hastened to follow the example of her sister. "Oh, my poor dear children! if we should fail, what'll become of them?"

"Die, I s'pose, like we will," said their maiden aunt. "But it won't do to fool away any time in talking—we've got to act—and that, too, before the scoundrels get in. I'll go and speak 'em fair, and keep 'em from breaking in if I can, whilst you run and get the powder."

"Will we need a light?" asked Mrs. Parker.

"Yes, but I'll tend to that; you won't want any to get the powder with, 'cause it aint ourselves we want to blow up."

With this both hurried out of their bed-room into a large apartment, which occupied nearly the whole of the front side of the dwelling, and was used, as is customary in farm houses, as a sitting-room, dining-room and kitchen. From this apartment a door led outside, another into the cellar, and a third into a wing of small dimensions, which was much newer than the main building, and was principally used as a kind of work-shop and store-room.

"Who's there? and what do you want?" screamed out Miss Price, as soon as she reached the kitchen, while her sister hurried down the cellar stairs to get the powder.

"Open the door, you angel, and we'll tell you," was answered from the outside, accompanied with a laugh that was neither merry nor musical.

"Well, you ought to tell us who you are and what you want afore we open the door, 'cause we're only two lone women, that don't like to let everybody in at this time of night," rejoined Miss Price, as she busied herself in lighting a candle.

"Oh, we're real gentlemen, we is—just the kind to suit two sech ladies as you," said the same voice. "Come, be quick now, will you? 'cause we're gitting tired of waiting, and some on us might take a notion to stave the door in, d'ye see?"

By this time Mrs. Parker had reappeared, with the keg of powder in her arms, and, lighted and directed by her sister, whose sharp features expressed a desperate determination, she hastened to place it in the shop-room, about half way between the door opening from the main building into it and another that led to the party outside. Miss Price then took down the loaded rifle from the hooks on which it rested, and, having reprimed it from a horn, hastened to set the candle on the floor, a little beyond the keg of powder, so that the light shone full upon it.

"Oh, my poor children! God help us all!" said Mrs. Parker, in a low, agitated tone.

"It will all depend upon one single shot, Nancy," returned her sister, with compressed lips and an unquailing eye, as she placed a chair in the doorway, between the larger and smaller buildings, for her rifle to rest on while she sighted it. "I don't hardly 'spect I'll live through it, whether our plan succeeds or not," she added, solemnly; "so just kiss me good-bye, Nancy."

The sisters now embraced, Mrs. Parker giving way to tears and sobs, but Miss Price remaining firm and outwardly composed.

"There, Nancy," pursued the maiden sister, as if she were giving directions about some of the ordinary affairs of life, "we're as ready now as we can be, I s'pose—so just run and shove back the bolts of the shop-door, but don't make any noise about it, and then hurry into the bed-room, to your children, and pray for all of us. If God is pleased to smile upon our hopes, you and they most likely will be saved, and my poor life aint much matter one way or t'other."

"Oh, Sally," sobbed Mrs. Parker, "how can I see you give yourself up to die for me and my children?"

"Oh, that's nothing, Nancy. I've got to die some time, and I don't much care about living, except for you and the little dears, and you can often kiss 'em for me and tell 'em about aunty. William, that should have been mine, he's in Heaven, you know, and may be when I die I shall meet him again. But, come! come! there aint no more time to talk—for already them scoundrels is trying to break down the door."

This was literally true. The party outside, becoming madly impatient at the delay of those inside to throw open the door to them, were now in the act of battering it down, and loudly cursing and swearing at the occupants of the dwelling. Mrs. Parker hastened to undo the bolts of the wing door, which for some reason the assailants had not touched, and when she got back to her sister, the latter was kneeling before the chair in the doorway, her rifle rested and pointed at the keg.

"Go, Nancy—go—and God bless you!"

"And you, Sally!" sobbed the other, as she again kissed her and hurried away to the room in which her innocent children were still sleeping, undisturbed by the noise, and unconscious of their danger.

"Halloo outside there!" now called out Miss Price, in a loud tone; "what are you trying to do?"

"Break in, you —— she witch!" cried one of the robbers.

"Well, can't you wait for me to open the door?"

"Not unless your —— quick about it!"

"Well, I can't get that ere door open; but t'other one's all right; come in that way, will you?"

The pounding ceased, and a moment after a voice exclaimed, "Ah! here we are!" and as the door swung back a dozen men came crowding into the room.

The foremost had just barely got a glimpse of our heroine, sighting her rifle, and was in the act of springing aside to escape being shot, when she fired the whole charge directly into the keg of powder, which instantly exploded with a tremendous report, tearing the wing all to pieces, considerably shattering the main building, and killing ten of the fifteen midnight marauders—blowing heads, legs, arms and bodies in every direction. Of the five that now remained alive two were wounded, and all so terribly frightened as to think nothing of so much importance as a hurried flight from the scene of the disaster.

The noble-minded heroine herself was blown back across the kitchen, but fortunately was not killed, though seriously injured. Her sister found her in the darkness and confusion, by her groans, and cared for her so tenderly afterward that she finally recovered.

The explosion was heard for miles around; and the next day the news flew so rapidly, that before night at least fifty people were gathered at the farm, besides a small body of American troopers; all of whom assisted in collecting and burying the dead villains, clearing away the rubbish, and putting things into as comfortable a shape as possible for the sisters, who had resolved to remain where they were.

On being questioned as to why she did not fire the powder by a train, instead of shooting into it, Miss Price replied, that she had feared it might fail, and she preferred risking her life to make the thing sure, and thus save her sister and the children.

Such noble heroism had many parallels during the war of the Revolution.

* * *

ONE KIND OF EMBEZZLEMENT.

A SKETCH FOR YOUNG MEN.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

John Perkins and Silas Tower were walking in company. It was morning, and they were on their way to business. Perkins was a young man—perhaps eight-and-twenty; and Tower was approaching the middle age.

"Ah," said Perkins, in a tone of fretfulness, "here comes Matthew Baldwin."

The person thus alluded to was at that moment crossing the street, and as he reached the sidewalk he stopped in front of our two friends. He was a rough-clad, brown-faced man, with a frank, open countenance, and he earned his bread by hard work from day to day.

"Good morning," said Matthew Baldwin.

Perkins and Tower returned the salutation.

"Mr. Perkins," pursued the laboring man, with a show of nervousness in his manner, "could you make it convenient to let me have a little money this morning?"

"I declare, Matthew, you have hit me in a most unfortunate time," replied John Perkins, laughing. His laugh was a business laugh.

"I am sorry, sir," said the laboring man. "The bill is only eight dollars; and I need the money very much. If you could contrive to spare me a part of it——"

"No, no,—hold on a few days, Matthew, and you shall have the whole of it. I haven't got it now. If I don't see you when I have it, I'll send it in to you."

Matthew Baldwin turned away with a reluctant step, and the two friends pursued their way.

"Poor Matthew is disappointed," remarked Tower.

"Yes, I suppose so," responded Perkins.

"I had half a mind to offer to lend you the money for him."

"I'm glad you did not, Silas, for then I should have been forced to pay him."

"But, John, you surely would not keep the poor man out of his money if you could raise it for him."

"I don't [illegible]" was Perkins's reply.

Silas Tower believed that he knew his friend's fault, and he determined to speak his mind freely.

"I think," he said, in a careful, considerate way, "that you could have paid Matthew Baldwin eight dollars if you had so wished. Am I not right?"

"If I had wished to pay away all the money I have with me, I suppose I could. But I don't like to do that."

"Why not?"

"Why not?" repeated Perkins, with elevated eye-brows. "Why—because I like to have a little money by me."

"For what?"

"For what?" was the echo. "Why—there may be a thousand things for which I might need money."

"And for what can you need money more than to pay an honest debt to a hard-working, needy man? Now, John, you must pardon me if I speak plainly."

"Go ahead," cried Perkins, with a light laugh.

"Then here it is," continued Silas Tower: "If you had eight dollars in your pocket when Matthew Baldwin asked you to pay him that sum, the money really belonged to him. He had worked for it, and you had received the full value of the demand. You had no more right, in honor, to keep that money than you would have had to embezzle a like amount."

"Upon my life, Silas, you put it strong; but I don't see it. Do you like to be without money?"

"No; but I would rather be without money than to be in debt."

"Do you mean to say that you would have paid away your last dollar had you been in my place a few minutes ago?"

"Certainly I would. And why should I wish to keep it? If I have money in my pocket, which is not already appropriated, I use it to supply my wants——"

"And to meet emergencies," suggested Perkins.

"Yes—to meet emergencies," admitted Tower. "And what greater emergency can arise than the coming of such an application as Baldwin made to you? When a friend wants to borrow money of me, I am apt to consider my own convenience first; but when a man comes to me for money which I owe him, I pay it if I have it in my possession. In the first place, the money is really and truly his, and I only have it in keeping for him. Matthew Baldwin is a poor man, working hard to support himself and family; and when you hired him, you knew that he needed the pay for his work from day to day—or, at least, from week to week. When he had done his work, you owed him eight dollars; and, if you had eight dollars in your pocket, the sum was his, and not yours; and when he asked you for it, and you told him you could not pay it, you were acting out what I should call one kind of embezzlement."

John Perkins laughed.

"And," pursued Tower, taking no notice of the interruption, "there is another reason why you should have paid him the money, even though it took your last penny. You should have done it for your own good. While a man is in debt he cannot afford to waste money; he needs to save with a careful hand; but he will not save if he carries money just for the sake of spending it. Now mark me, John, and say if I do not tell the truth: If you made it the fixed rule of your life to pay all your debts as soon as they were due, you would in one sense, never be in debt; and you would then never be spending money which was not yours. This determination, put in practice, would free you from all embarrassment, and lead you into the confidence of your fellows. In short, the man who never gets into debt, or who, if debt must come, holds the liquidating of that debt as of the chiefest necessity, will be pretty sure to prosper; and, in the end, he will not be likely to be called upon to pay away his last dollar. And now, my dear fellow, if you want my advice, I can give it to you."

"Go ahead."

"Do you go back this very morning, and pay Matthew Baldwin what you owe him. Go now, before you go to your work. If it takes the last dollar, go and do it. Or, if you have but the eight dollars, go and tell him so, and ask him to divide with you."

"I guess I must think of it awhile," said Perkins, with another laugh.

"At all events," added Tower, "you will allow me to speak with you again on the subject?"

"Certainly."

At this juncture the two friends separated, Tower going to his store, while Perkins pursued his way to the machine shop, where he earned two dollars and a half a day. This was Monday morning.

On Tuesday morning John Perkins saw Matthew Baldwin in the street, and he avoided him—shrank off down a narrow by-way, so as not to meet his poor creditor.

On Wednesday morning John Perkins saw Matthew Baldwin again; but he was not forced to dodge out of the way, for this time the poor laboring man was standing at the door of a physician's office.

On Thursday morning, as John Perkins was going to his shop, he saw in the street ahead of him, Matthew Baldwin and Silas Tower, engaged in conversation. Directly Baldwin crossed the street and went away, while Tower waited for Perkins to come up. The two friends shook hands, and passed the compliments of the morning.

"Poor Baldwin is in trouble," said Tower, as they walked on.

"Ah, how so?" asked Perkins.

"His wife is very sick—has been sick over a week; and two of his children are down with diphtheria. One of them the doctor thinks will die. Poor fellow! I pity him. What with nurses to hire, and medicine to buy, and provisions of all kinds so high, he finds it hard to get along. I lent him five dollars this morning; or rather, I paid him in advance for some work which he has promised to do for me."

John Perkins seemed to be a little nervous.

"By the way," pursued Tower, after they had walked on a little while in silence, "have you paid Baldwin that eight dollars yet?"

"No—I haven't," replied John, reluctantly.

"Have you got money enough with you to pay it?"

"No."

"How much have you?"

"Not over three or four dollars."

"Now John," said Tower, with sudden earnestness, "I am going to ask you a question; and you can answer me, or not, as you please. What have you done with the money you had Monday morning?"

At first John Perkins could not tell what he had done with it; but finally he made out to account for a part of it. There were two theatre tickets at fifty cents each. One oyster supper for himself and a friend—a dollar. A horse and wagon for a moonlight ride—two dollars. And then he owned to numerous glasses of soda and beer. In all he accounted for six dollars, or thereabouts.

"I declare," said Tower, shaking his head, and speaking with solemn seriousness, "I would not like to borrow money of Matthew Baldwin for such purposes!"

"How?" uttered John. "Borrow—of Matthew Baldwin?"

"O, you need not try to hide the truth, John. You know what I mean."

At this point the friends separated; and as John Perkins walked towards his shop the words of Silas Tower rang in his ears. Did he know what his friend had meant? Aye—that he did; and when he reached his place of work he reflected long and seriously.

"I declare," he muttered to himself, as he rolled up his sleeves, and arranged his tools, "I think Tower is right. I could have paid Baldwin last Monday morning if I had only thought so. I wish I had." He set his lathe, and fixed a bar of iron for turning. "If I had paid him," he continued, as he watched the bits of iron drop from the revolving bar, "I should at this moment be better off than I am. Of course I shouldn't have borrowed money to go to the theatre with, nor to pay for horses with. By the powers! Silas told the truth. That money honestly belonged to Matthew Baldwin."

And so, through the day, John Perkins talked with himself upon the subject thus brought before him, and before night he had resolved that he would turn over a new leaf.

On Friday morning John Perkins saw a man carrying a little coffin into Matthew Baldwin's house. The sight caused him to reflect more deeply than he had done on the day before. That little coffin, with its tale of bereavement and wo, led him into sympathy with the sufferers; and the thought that his failure in duty might have added to the sufferings of the lowly household smote him to the heart.

Saturday evening Perkins knocked at Matthew Baldwin's door. The poor man answered the summons. He was bowed with grief and his eyes were red with weeping.

"Pardon me for calling at this time," said Perkins, in subdued tones; "but I thought you might need the money I owed you."

"Indeed, sir, I do need it; and I thank you for your kindness in remembering me." The man's face brightened as he received the money, and he expressed his thanks again.

"In the time to come," said John Perkins, "I may have considerable work for you to do; and I promise that you shall never again have occasion to ask me twice for what is your due."

And he kept his word.

People who were acquainted with John Perkins, and who saw him often, fancied that he walked more stately and proudly than he used to walk; and the impression with some was, that he had met with a stroke of good fortune. The grocer, and the baker, and the butcher were among those who imagined that a large sum of money had fallen to him.

Six months passed away. John Perkins and Silas Tower were walking together as we have seen them before.

"My dear Silas," said John, in continuation of a conversation already begun, "I owe it all to you. To you I am indebted for my emancipation from one of the meanest and most galling states of servitude that ever laid its yoke upon the neck of man. Six months ago I was hampered with petty debts, and I was growing more and more inclined to shirk the payment of them; but it is so no more. I now regard a debt as a thing to be shunned; but if I must incur a debt, I pay it as soon as I can. If I had an enemy, and was malevolent enough to wish him ill, I can think of no greater evil to call down as a curse upon him than a state of bondage to perplexing, harassing Debt."

* * *

—To be able to bear provocation, is an argument of great wisdom; and to forgive it, of great mind.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

Beware when the great God lets loose a thinker on this planet. Then all things are at risk. It is as when a conflagration has broken out in a great city, and no man knows what is safe or where it will end.

Old age ought not to creep on a human mind. In nature every moment is new; the past is always swallowed and forgotten; the coming only is sacred.

When a strong brain is weighed with a true heart, it seems like balancing a bubble against a wedge of gold.

The philosopher takes his track by observation; the man of genius and the wild goose trust to an inner sense.

It takes a very *true* man to be a fitting companion for a woman of genius, but not a very great one.

He who reforms himself has done more towards reforming the public than a crowd of noisy patriots.

The apron-strings of an American mother are of india-rubber; her boy belongs where he is wanted.

If God bestows upon you the terrible gift of genius, accept it thankfully, but with fear and trembling.

The world's experience preaches in vain, every man thinking himself an exception to all general rules.

Many women think of nothing but dress. To them the horizon is but the blue crinoline of creation.

Balaam blessed when he wanted to curse, and scurrilous editors praise when they think they abuse.

It seems a pity that a man's glands cannot, like a snail's, secrete a dwelling-house for him.

The sound of a kiss is not so loud as that of a cannon, but its echo often lasts much longer.

Rich men place their own busts in their halls, but put the statues of the gods out in their yards.

Heaven could execute its purposes just as easily without great men as without little ones.

There is very little charity or benevolence in a deed, if the doer thinks there is a great deal.

Men require to know all the minutiæ of a future state; they would pick the lock of Heaven.

We never walk so straight to the grave of a friend as we are forever walking to our own.

A married couple are often the happier for making the fitness or adaptedness they don't find.

Humanity toward a subdued foe is as noble as the valor displayed in encountering him.

It is time enough to think of victory when we have assured the means of avoiding defeat.

Perfect tranquillity and a shining reputation cannot be enjoyed at the same time.

Children often glance off from their parental probabilities at very unexpected angles.

The cottage is sure to suffer for every error of the court, the cabinet, or the camp.

True delicacy is always more wounded by an offence *from* itself than *to* itself.

Fools are the worst of all thieves; they rob us of time and temper.

Truth bears the stamp of no man's name; it is God's own coin.

In the affairs of love, the longest experience is the greatest disqualification.

Faith, like a feather-bed, is generally improved by an occasional shaking up.

Be pure but not stern; have moral excellencies, but don't bristle with them.

The fire of genius, however brilliant, seldom has power to warm the hearthstone.

Error loves to walk arm in arm with truth to make itself thought respectable.

A young enchantress may in time come to be called an old witch.

The most troublesome fools are those who have some wit.

Revenge is a much more punctual paymaster than gratitude.

If you are not happy, marriage may untie the knot.

To be careful is the true way to guard against care.

CURRENT ITEMS

A severe contest came off, the other evening, at a sailor boarding-house, in the Fourth Ward, between the keeper of the house and a boarder on one side, and a couple of policemen on the other, the cause being an attempt on the part of the officers to arrest the keeper of the house for brutally beating a carman. The policemen were assailed with knives, pitchers and a navy sword; but with their clubs they succeeded in beating the belligerents into submission; and in the course of the contest the keeper of the house was hurt so badly it was supposed he could not survive.

A bright lad, about eight years old, in attempting to leave a city railroad car, in Fulton avenue, Brooklyn, just as another car was coming from the opposite direction, got caught between the two, was knocked down, and had one leg and one arm broken. He was carried to the hospital, where it was decided that, to save his life, it would be necessary to amputate the broken leg, which was done; but the poor little fellow suffered so terribly it was thought that he would not live long.

A little girl, whose parents live in Greene street, fell down the basement stairs, with a babe in her arms, one day recently, and was very badly injured; but she managed to protect the infant, so that it escaped without serious harm. It was owing to her efforts to save the babe harmless, and the consequent neglect of her personal safety, that the brave and unselfish child was herself so badly hurt.

A young woman about twenty-three years of age, who was living in a family in Houston street, accidentally set her clothes on fire, at a kitchen range, one evening not long since, and was at once enveloped in flames, and ran shrieking through the house. She was burned so badly before the flames could be extinguished, that she died during the night.

A bold rogue stole a horse and wagon, one day recently, in broad day light, from before a store in Pine street. He drove off rapidly, but was traced, and finally overhauled and taken in custody. The value of the horse and wagon being some $250, the thief will probably be furnished with lodgings at Sing Sing for several years to come.

A fight occurred in a lager-bier saloon on the upper part of the Island, one day not long since, during which one of the parties was stabbed in the back with some sharp instrument, whereby a dangerous and perhaps a fatal wound was inflicted. The other parties were arrested and held to await the result of the injured man's wound.

A couple of men were arrested, the other day, at about the same hour, but in different parts of the city, for attempting to pass counterfeit one-hundred-dollar bills on the Waltham Bank of Waltham, Mass. Counterfeits of a like denomination on the same bank were offered at many other places in the city on the same day.

As a young lady was walking on Broadway, the other day, carrying a purse containing nearly $100 in her hand, a bold young thief snatched the purse and ran off with it at his best speed. The aid of the police was invoked, and they succeeded in tracing out and arresting the offender, and recovered fifty dollars of the money.

A store in West Forty-third street was robbed one evening not long since of silk goods to the value of about $800; but the thief, being hard pressed by a person who discovered him, dropped his plunder in order to save himself, and succeeded in eluding pursuit.

A man named Donald Cloherty fell from the inside scaffold of a building in Beekman street, one day not long since, and striking on some joists, about twelve feet below the place he fell from, his left arm and two of his ribs were broken.

An intemperate man, who for several weeks had been drinking to very great excess, drowned himself, one day lately, in a shallow pond in Eighty-seventh street. It is supposed that he was sober at the time he committed the deed, and was suffering the agonies of remorse.

A boy, who was playing on the wharf at the foot of Barling slip, one afternoon lately, fell into the water, between the wharf and a vessel, and going under the latter, was drowned.

A boy fell from the roof of a house, in Mulberry street, one day not long since, and was crushed and mangled so badly, it was supposed that he could not long survive.

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THE ROMAN EMPERORS.—No. 12.

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

JULIAN AND SEVERUS.

After the murder of the Emperor Pertinax, the soldiers of the Pretorian Guard, in their encampment on the hills outside of Rome, decided to sell the sceptre of the world to the highest bidder. With their swords they could give a good title. Soldiers from the ramparts immediately proclaimed through the streets of Rome, the auction which was to take place, certainly the most extraordinary which had ever occurred on this globe. It is a singular comment upon the morals and the utter heartlessness of that age, that Sulpicianus, governor of Rome, and son in law of Pertinax, was the first bidder. As governor of the city, he had, upon the first alarm of the mutiny, hastened to the camp to quell the fury of the soldiers. While there the murderers returned in hideous clamor, bearing the head of Pertinax on a lance. With this appaling spectacle before him, Sulpicianus offered a sum amounting to $800 of our money to each of the 16,000 soldiers of the Guard for the crown.

But by this time the offer of the auction had reached the ears of Didius Julianus, a wealthy senator, deemed the richest man in Rome. Regardless of the public calamities, he was sitting at his dinner table with guests, in the enjoyment of every luxury which wealth could confer. His ambitious wife and daughter, entreated him to purchase the empire and thus make the one an empress, the other a princess. The vanity of the silly old man was easily inflamed. He hastened to the camp, where he found Sulpicianus, eagerly striving to effect a trade. From the foot of the rampart Julianus began to bid against his rival. It was a scene of intense excitement between the competitors and of great fun and frolic among the soldiers. Julian at last offered 6250 drachms, over $1000 to each soldier, making a sum total of 16,000,000 of dollars. The bid was accepted. Sulpicianus could not go above it.

Thus far Julianus had stood upon the escarp outside of the redoubt. The gates of the camp were now thrown open to him, and the soldiers acknowledging him their emperor took the oath of allegiance. They then incircled him in their ranks, surrounding him and protecting him with their glittering shields, and thus exhibited him, in the imperial purple, through all the principal streets of the city. The senate was convened, and under the *moral suasion* of the daggers and bludgeons of the soldiers, ratified their choice. From the Senate Chamber Julian was escorted with increasing pomp to the palace. Here the first object which struck his eye, was the headless body of Pertinax which the barbarous soldiers had not taken the trouble to remove. The unenlightened populace of Rome, and the motley crowd from all nations, which then thronged the capital, probably gazed upon these scenes with but little sense of the degradation which they proclaimed. For Rome it was merely another gala day. For the miserable masses there was then no other joy than these gorgeous shows. Doubtless beauty and fashion lent all their attractions to the scene. Ladies from the balconies waved their scarfs; flowers were strewed along the pavements; embroidered banners waved in the breeze, music burst from a hundred bands, and the gleam of polished armor, of helmets, shields and spears, dazzled the eye.

By the order of the new Emperor a magnificent feast was prepared in the palace, and there was feasting, music and revelry until morning. But there are no hours so sad as those at the close of a feast, when the revelers have retired and silence reigns in the deserted halls. It was observed that Julian was in deep dejection. He wandered through the vast saloons of the palace seeking rest and finding none. He had purchased a perilous prize, and the fate of his predecessor, admonished him as to his own probable doom. His first attempt to sleep satisfied him that the regal pillow was planted thick with thorns. He was on the throne without a friend. The soldiers who had placed him there despised him. The Senate and the nobles were indignant that by money alone, one should become monarch of the world. Indignation and contempt spread rapidly.

There were other Roman armies, in different parts of the empire, flushed with victory, proud in fancied pre-eminence, far more numerous than the Pretorian band, and who were by no means disposed to allow that band to take the intiative in making and unmaking emperors. Just across the Adriatic sea, in Illysicum, there were three Roman legions, amounting to nearly 20,000 men under command of a renowned general, Septimus Severus. A large number of auxiliaries were also attached to this army. There was a similar force in Britain, commanded by Clodius Albinus. In Syria, Pescennius Niger was at the head of a military army still more numerous and powerful than that of Severus or Albinus. Each of these three armies felt that they had as good a right to dispose of the crown, as the few cohorts at Rome. Each of these renowned generals, felt that he had a far better right to the imperial purple, than a mere rich man, who had no personal renown, and nothing but his money to recommend him. Incited by its leader, each of these three armies, in its own encampment declared its general to be emperor and enthroned him with all military pomp. There were now four emperors. Who was to be supreme was to be settled by the horrid ordeal of battle. From Greece, Syria, and Britain vast armies were immediately on the rapid march, to test their powers beneath the walls of Rome. Severus promised his soldiers as a requital for the crown $2000 each. He could easily obtain the sum by the plunder of a province, and the seizure of a few thousand slaves. By a rapid march his troops in ten days could be within sight of the towers of Rome. Albinus in Britain was a man of very illustrious lineage, which in those days added greatly to his power.

Niger, by personal merit alone had risen from obscurity. The whole of the Eastern empire rallied around him. Even the barbaric kings beyond the Tigris and the Euphratis offered him their homage and services. Thus suddenly anarchy burst upon the Roman world, and there appeared to be no possible escape from a long and devastating civil war, but in the energy of some one of the men, who should strike down all the rest, and establish the peace of despotism. Severus proved to be that man. Like eagles in their flight his banners crossed the Julian Alps. The wretched Julian trembled at his approach. In his dismay he sent ambassadors to Severus, offering to share with him the empire. Severus scorned the compromise. Pressing eagerly on, at the head of his troops, city after city with acclamation acknowledged his sway. The Pretorian guard, menaced by a force so powerful, could neither escape nor resist. Severus, as he drew near, imperiously sent an order, for those haughty troops to await his arrival on a large plain near the city, drawn up in order to receive with honor their lawful sovereign and take the vows of allegiance. There was no alternative but obedience or merciless massacre. In consternation they awaited his arrival. Soon in the distant horizon clouds of dust were seen, indicating the approach of his horsemen; then the bugle's peal reverberated over the hill; then the silken banners gleamed in the bright rays of an Italian morning. Severus had moved his immense force over mountains and plains, at the rate of more than twenty miles a day. His cohorts came rolling on like the tide. Sternly, silently they surrounded the trembling Guard. A squadron of horse, with the swoop of the whirlwind, took possession of their camp, with all their arms and magazines. When the whole Guard, thus helpless, were encompassed by the leveled spears of their captors, Severus ascended a temporary throne, sternly reproached them with perfidy and cowardice, disbanded the organization, dismissed them all in disgrace, despoiled them of all their treasures and ornaments, and banished them on pain of death to the distance of one hundred miles from the capital.

The funeral of the murdered Pertinax was then solemnized with all possible military pomp, and with every demonstration of honor for his memory and of grief over his death. Severus himself pronounced his funeral oration, Whether all this display of respect and grief were mere policy or not, it secured the gratitude of all the friends of Pertinax, and satisfied the senate and the people of Rome, that Severus alone was worthy to fill the throne, which the daggers of assassins had rendered vacant. Just before the arrival of Severus the trembling Senate met, unanimously acknowledged Severus as Emperor, denounced the Guard as the foul murderers of Pertinax, deposed Julian as an usurper, and doomed him to be beheaded as a felon. The wretched man, after a reign of misery and despair of sixty-six days, was led by brawny executioners into one of the interior apartments of the palace, where his head was cut off.

Severus remained in Rome thirty days to establish his government and to consolidate his power, and then marched against Niger, whose abilities and power he most dreaded. Proudly assuming that he had no rival, without even mentioning the name of Niger, he announced to the Senate that he was going to the East to regulate the state of those disordered provinces. The sons of Niger had fallen into the hands of Severus on his march to Rome, and he held them as hostages for the good conduct of their father. Adroitly but perfidiously he purchased the neutrality of Albinus in Britain, investing him with imperial power over those provinces, until, Niger in the East being overthrown, he could have time and strength to bring all the West also under his undisputed sway. One cannot but loathe the dissimulation which permitted Severus, with these designs in view, to write to Albinus, as the "brother of his soul and of his empire," and to send the most affectionate salutations to his wife and his children. The messenger who conveyed this letter was commissioned, by the imperial assassin, to watch his opportunity, and if possible to plunge his dagger into the heart of Albinus. Rogues suspect rogues, and Albinus eluded the dagger's point.

In three great battles Niger's army was destroyed and he lost his head. The sword of the energetic conqueror soon brought the whole East into trembling submission. Severus then rending off the veil of hypocrisy, turned to the West, and cut the army of Albinus to pieces on the plains of Gaul. Albinus, in despair, plunged his own sword into his heart. His wife and children were inhumanly massacred. The children of Niger were also sent to the block. The head of Albinus was sent to Rome, while his body, after being trodden under foot by a squadron of cavalry, was left in its horrid mutilation to be devoured by dogs.

The empire was thus again united under one head. At length the dying hour came to the ambitious, successful, guilty Severus. He died in gloom, with nothing in the past to reflect upon with pleasure and nothing in the future to hope for. As his wretched spirit passed into the deep unknown, he exclaimed, "*Omnia fui et nihil expedit*"—I have been all things, and all things are of little value.

◆

—The British merchants who have been selling vessels to the South to be used in destroying our commerce, seem to have come under a cloud, of late, and are beginning to clamor for a "fair hearing." "It is simply the spirit of trade," they say, "which induces us to sell vessels and munitions of war to the American rebels. We will not only sell *them* gunboats, but *we will also sell the Unionists better war vessels to capture their gunboats with.*" That is a perfectly frank, commercial and British explanation of the whole matter. The "spirit of trade" is a most powerful spirit, and one that it is difficult to exorcise.

◆

—Mrs. Southworth has struck a rich vein of character in the little hero of her story now publishing in the Ledger. In fact, Ishmael Worth is not exactly a creation of genius and fancy. *That boy, under another name*, actually lived, and struggled, and suffered, and triumphed, and became one of the foremost men of his time—an accomplished gentleman, a learned jurist, an eloquent advocate, Attorney-General of the United States, and a popular candidate for the Presidency. In some future number we shall give his real name. His story, as Mrs. Southworth tells it, is in our opinion the best possible reading for children and youth of both sexes. It is not only a picture of the struggles of the poorest and most unfortunate of children for subsistence and even *existence*, but it is also the exhibition of an exalted nature struggling with marvellous energy for development, with nothing to rely upon but itself and the Providence of God. And the patience, the sweetness, the energy and the honesty shown by this poor, lonely, orphan boy, in his life-battle from obscurity to fame, furnish lessons for the youth of the land such as could be obtained from no other source. We commend it, therefore, to the especial perusal of all the young; nor will the middle-aged and old be able to read it without paying to it the tribute of sympathetic tears.

BRAG.

Individually, it may be said of our fellow-creatures (granting the usual exceptions, of course,) that "all men are braggarts;" and if this is true of individuals, it is yet more so of all nations, associations, corporations, and other aggregations. The Englishman accuses the American of being the greatest braggart in the world, while the American has in his possession anecdotes of John Bull tending to prove that stout old party not altogether averse to blowing his own horn very loud and very long. But then, in England, the different nationalities are all down upon each other for the same peculiarity. The Scotchman chaffs the Welchman, who said that his ancestors did not avail themselves of Noah's Ark, on the occasion of the general deluge, because they had a line of steamers of their own. The Welchman challenges, and probably hoots, the Scotchman who says that Ben Nevis is higher than Snowden. The Irishman tells them both that their mountains are only mole-hills compared with Slievenamon, and says that, for an inconsiderable wager, he will tie one hand behind his back, and throw—fair collar and elbow grip, mind you, *with one hand tied*—any Englishman, Welchman, and Scotchman that will enter the ring against him, one down and t'other come on.

These are all very excellent braggarts in their way, but, to make a mot by it, they cannot hold a candle to the Kentuckian, who, if you decline to drink with him, or otherwise hurt his feelings, will "chaw you up and spit you through a knot-hole." In this expression, however, the Kentuckian renders himself amenable to the charge of plagiarism from the Arab swaggerer, who said, centuries ago, that he "could chew up a man in steel armor and spit him against the sky." That Arab might be useful in these days of iron-clads. A *Monitor* would be only a quid for him.

"Is that your poor-house?" said an Irishman travelling in England to a friend who was doing the honors of a country town to him. "Is *that* your poor-house? Why our poor-house at Ballymagallagher is more than four times as big as that!" This is an example of the brag that overleaps itself: in his anxiety to establish a crow over the Englishman, the Milesian forgot that the size of the poor-house bears an inverse proportion to the prosperity of the parish.

In the matter of brag, however, all men must pale their ineffectual fires before the man of Gascony—that is, the good old-fashioned Gascon of former days, whose proficiency in boastful talk has furnished to language a word expressive of the thing. "Gasconade," both as a substantive and a verb, has long been adopted into English as a synonym for "swagger," "brag," "swash-buckler," and such like. The Gascon, like the Irishman, had wit in his madness, and was apt to give a humorous turn to his braggadocio.

It is told of a certain old Gascon, that, while enjoying the hospitality of a Cardinal, the topic upon which he chiefly dwelt was the Garonne, compared with which, he insisted, all other rivers were insignificant. His host ventured to suggest that the Tiber, perhaps, might stand a favorable comparison with the lauded river of the Gascon, upon which the latter exclaimed:

"The Tiber? My dear sir, if the Tiber had the impertinence to come within ten miles of my castle, I'd put it into a pint bottle!"

Sometimes the Gascon made brag a profitable game. A tall, herculean fellow of that race, astride upon a wretched pony, encountered, as he rode over a bridge, a richly-dressed cavalier mounted upon a noble steed. Saluting the horseman, the Gascon said to him, "I will bet you ten golden pieces that I can do with my horse what you can't do with yours." "Done," said the cavalier, whereupon the Gascon dis[illegible] up in his arms, threw it over the battlements into the river, thus winning his wager, to the great discomfiture of the owner of the noble steed.

Two Gascons were fighting a duel. Just as they had crossed swords, one of them said to the other—"What grace! what coolness! 'twere a pity, now, to kill such a fine fellow as you: beg your life of me and I will grant it."

The other did not see the matter in that light, however, and expressed his determination to fight it out. Nevertheless the first Gascon, who had a great objection to fighting, kept well beyond sword's length, saying:

"Well parried! What a wonderful guard!—Hold now, I wouldn't hurt you for the world; that is if you'll only drop your sword and beg your life of me."

"Never."

"You won't?—quite sure you won't, eh?"

"Quite."

"Obstinate man! Since you won't beg your life of me, then I must only beg mine of you: take my sword!"

There are few persons who have sufficient command over themselves to refrain from bragging of their skill in horsemanship, and it is invariably to be observed that the worst riders are the most sensitive with regard to their equestrian glory. Sir Walter Scott, who was rather a judge of character, says somewhere that he knew of but few young men, and those of the sturdy moral persuasion, who would not rather be accused of some deviation from the path of virtue than of want of skill in horsemanship.

"I can leap this horse of mine over a five-barred gate," said an Englishman.

"O git eout!" exclaimed a Yankee; "I'll *trot* mine agin you over two five-barred gates one on top of the other!"

Perhaps brag, as a science or fine art, has never been carried to the same extent anywhere else as among the Chinese. The very styles and titles of that queer, cruel country are a double distillation of treble X brag, served up very hot and strong. First Cousin to the Sun, and Brother-in-law of the Moon, are the mildest relationships acknowledged by the potentates of Pekin, who quote their celestial origin to account for their remarkable superiority in beauty and virtue to the rest of the human race!

Somewhere in the interior of Africa, we think it is, there exists a small kingdom of a few square miles in extent, the monarch of which causes tom-toms to be beaten, and horns blown, as soon as he has gobbled up his meal of raw meat, and a proclamation to be uttered by his heralds intimating to all the peoples of the earth that they are quite at liberty to take their dinners, now that the great man has had his.

Shakespeare has a fine perception of the bully brag, for which pray see his Ancient Pistol, and when found make a note of; and also his Fat Knight, whose little story of the seven men in buckram is as pretty a piece of good, old-fashioned braggadocio as any we remember.

The lower animals are brags as well as their dominator, man—birds, beasts, and, we have no doubt, reptiles, fishes and insects, too, if we could only understand them. The lion's roar is brag, and so is the donkey's bray. What greater incarnation of brag can there be than a full-blown peacock with his tail up? Nor is the red-gilled turkeycock to be despised as a braggart when he struts and gobbles among his dowdy hens; though of all the barn-door fellows, perhaps there is none more defiant in his challenge to all creation than glorious Chanticleer, when he sounds his loud clarion in direct opposition to the upward struggles of the rising sun, which he doubtless looks upon as a coming rival.

Brag is, for the most part, a harmless deception. An old proverb truly says that braggarts are generally cowards; nor was the proverb-maker at fault who averred that though "Brag is a good dog, Holdfast is a better."

◆

EDITING IN THE OLDEN TIME.

The labors of newspaper Editors three quarters of a century ago were almost nominal. Happy fellows!—in glancing over the discolored files of their gazettes one can not help envying them. A few dozen lines of original matter satisfied the considerate readers of those days. The patrons of the press were not then, as now, omniverous and insatiable. It was the golden age of the Editorial Fraternity, and it has passed never to return. Rivington, the celebrated Tory Editor of the Revolution, rarely wrote an article himself—depending chiefly upon the contributions of British officers, Burgoyne among the number. Dr. Franklin only favored his subscribers with a "leader" now and then, and his lucubrations though pithy were very brief. Hugh Gaine, who published and edited a small concern about twelve inches by ten in this city during and after the Revolutionary war, furnished little else than the foreign news, and never produced anything original except short paragraphs.

From 1776 to 1798 the three prominent editors in this country were Cobbett, Cheetham and Callender—"the three C's," as they were called. The two latter were patronized by Jefferson, and they rewarded him for a thousand acts of generosity and kindness by lampooning and abusing him. Each of these ingrates came to a bad end. Callender, after a long career of drunkenness and debauchery, was drowned in the East River; and Cheetham died, in penury, of yellow fever.

William Cobbett, the ablest of the three, published a paper called "The Porcupine" in Philadelphia in 1796. It was a scurrilous sheet. Franklin, Jefferson, Priestley and nearly all the leading patriots of the day, were blackguarded in its columns without stint, and without the slightest regard for the obligations of truth. Cobbett's "squibs" were bitter to the last degree; and though we have some specimens of newspaper ribaldry in these days that are hard to beat, they are mild in comparison with some of his ebullitions. Happening to have a few copies of "The Porcupine" at hand, we will give two or three samples of a style of abuse which finally made Philadelphia too hot for him, and compelled him to leave the country. Chief-Justice McKean, a man of eminent abilities though ungovernable temper, is thus depicted:

> "This vile old wretch, who disgraces the courts of the unfortunate State of Pennsylvania, was formerly a stableman in Chester County."

Referring to Dr. Logan, of Philadelphia, he says:

> "Yesterday the *learned Jug* took his departure for Trenton. He was conducted to Harrowgate by a party of *sans culottes*, where, we are informed, they were regaled with the choicest washings of the kitchen."

Fenno, a rival editor, is complimented as follows:

> "He has not only condescended to publish in his own paper that he is a *liar* and a *scoundrel*, but has contrived to get himself flogged for being actually *both*."

A little further on in the same paper we find the subjoined first-rate notice of American captains:

> "I have often asserted, what I hope nobody now will call in question, that the American captains of vessels are the most *malicious*, the most *lying scoundrels* in the universe."

The above choice extracts have not, we think, been surpassed in vulgarity and malice by any modern editor. And yet Cobbett could write as pure *English* as was ever put in print, and was the author of the clearest, simplest and best English grammar in existence.

The political newspapers of seventy or eighty years ago were really miserable affairs. You will find more evidences of mind and thought in a single number of one of our modern dailies, than in a hundred issues of any of the gazettes of the olden time.

◆

READING CHARACTER.

The world often forms a false estimate of a man's character, which will sometimes go for years in disguise, until detected by the light of some accidental circumstance brought to bear upon it. Under the guise of a bully, for instance, how often struts the pusillanimous craven. The fop will sometimes turn out, when you know him thoroughly, to be a man of talent and information, hiding himself under a bushel of fine clothes for some inscrutable purpose. Gruff old gentlemen are often remarked to be charitable to the poor, and bland old gentlemen are sometimes the reverse. Reading character is an art in itself. There are nice shades and touches only to be discerned by the practiced eye; and by such apparently insignificant points character may frequently be determined.

Lafitte, the eminent French banker, owed his first start in life to the circumstance of his being seen to pick up a pin in the court yard, as he was going to call upon a wealthy person for the purpose of seeking employment. The man who would pick up a pin, thought the wealthy person, must have some thrift about him, and so he gave him employment, and found that he had not mistaken his character.

Lord Lonsdale, Keeper of the Seal to William III. of England, was extremely dissipated in his youth, to the great trouble of his grand-uncle, old Sir John Lowther, who was very wealthy, and meant to make him his heir. So annoyed was the old gentleman, however, at the stories continually circulated respecting the extravagances of his nephew, that he took a journey up to London, for the purpose of altering his will in favor of other relatives. While there, Lonsdale used to call upon him every day, to pay his respects. Sir John always smoked of an evening, and, on one occasion, having asked his nephew for a piece of paper to light his pipe, the latter drew from his pocket a letter, and, tearing off the blank half of it, rolled it up to make a lighter, carefully extinguishing it and putting it away upon the mantelpiece when his uncle had got his pipe alight. This little touch of economy was not lost upon Sir John, who saw that his nephew possessed a natural inclination for order and "making the most of things," from which a good crop might be expected after the harvest of wild oats. And so the old gentleman did not alter his will; nor, as it turned out, could his fortune have fallen into better hands than those of the once dissipated nephew.

The "maddening cup" is said to be the greatest test of real character. "When the wine is in the truth comes out." One of the kings of England—an Edward, if we remember rightly—was so convinced of this fact, that he never appointed any person to an office about the court until he had first put him through the ordeal of a "big drunk." Once he had a new chaplain to initiate in this way, and the reverend gentleman, when well over his third bottle, talked so well and enthusiastically about horses and hunting, that the king proposed to him the position of stud groom instead of chaplain. The offer was accepted, and, as the old chronicler of the occasion tells us, "Although ye pulpitte might have suffered no loss, yet ye king's mewe (stables) had for certain a great gayne."

[From the New York Ledger, May 24th, 1862.]

ODE TO GIDEON.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

O Gideon! Gideon! hear the nation's prayers;
  Observe how rebels sneer and patriots grieve
To see the way you're managing affairs;
  O Gideon, take the hint—and take your leave!

Your friends declare that, ere the war began,
  (I can't deny, and therefore I admit it)
In private life you were an honored man;
  Then why, O Gideon, did you ever quit it?

I don't despise the smallest Christian grace;
  I reverence modest merit, I confess;
Long may you live—but in your proper place;
  And may your mighty beard be never less!

But if of water you are weakly fond,
  Why, Gideon, suffer from the sea's commotion?
Go sail a pleasure-boat upon a pond;
  And let old seamen dare the angry ocean!

Retire, O Gideon, to an onion-farm;
  Ply any trade that's innocent and slow;
Do anything—where you can do no harm;
  Go anywhere you fancy—only go!

'Tis plain salt-water and sea-air do not
  At all agree with one in your condition;
And when you next disgorge—I won't say what—
  For God's sake, Gideon, *throw up* your commission!

◆

OUR CITY POPULATION.

Every civilized nation has its representatives in the streets of New York. If an American born a few hundred miles from tide water were suddenly placed for the first time in our midst, without knowing his latitude and longitude, he might find it difficult to believe that he was in the United States. The ever-flowing tide of foreign emigration has pretty nearly overslaughed the peculiar American type of character in this city. Nowhere else upon the face of the earth, perhaps, is such a variety of nationalities to be seen within the same space as in Broadway. Irishmen, neat as imported, in their gray frieze coats, knee breeches, and coarse woollen stockings, with the *dudeen* stuck in their rusty wool hats; Germans, in odd-looking sacques and still more odd-looking slapjack hats or tasseled skull-caps; Scotchmen in "blue bonnets" and plaid waistcoats; Frenchmen, in blouses, gesticulating as Frenchmen only *can* gesticulate; Englishmen, heavily tailored and apparently afflicted with chronic stiff neck; Italians, whose sharp features look as if they had been cut out of pasteboard; Spaniards, grave and sallow; with a considerable sprinkling of Swedes, Swiss, Russians, Poles, Hungarians, and now and then a Turk, a Greek, an Arab, or a Chinaman, are to be met with any fine day in a stroll from Whitehall to Madison Square. Quite a large proportion, too, of our citizens, "to the manner born," have a European look, for it takes two or three generations to *Yankeefy* the scions of a foreign stock; so that between the contributions from abroad and the native-born offspring of "foreign alliances," the population of New York is a complete *olla podrida* of humanity. And this very mingling of races has helped to make us an energetic, vigorous people. There is nothing like an international mixing of bloods—provided the various streams run under skins of the same hue—to advance the mental and physical stamina of the species.

◆

THE USE OF GRANDMOTHERS.

A little boy, who had spilled a pitcher of milk, stood crying, in view of a whipping, over the wreck. A little playmate stepped up to him and said, condolingly:—Why, Bobby, haven't you got a *grandmother?*

If there's not a sermon in *that* text, where shall one find it? Who of us cannot remember this family mediator, always ready with an excuse for broken china, or torn clothes, or tardy lessons, or little white fibs? Who was it had always on hand the convenient stomach-ache, or headache, or toothache, to work on parental tenderness? Whose consoling stick of candy, or paper of sugar-plums, or seed-cake, never gave out; and who always kept strings to play horse with, and could improvise riding whips and tiny kites, and dress rag-babies, and tell stories between daylight and dark to an indefinable amount to ward off the dreaded go-to-bed hour? Who staid at home, none so happy, with the children while papa and mamma "went pleasuring?" Who straightened out the little waxen limbs for the coffin when papa and mamma were blind with tears? Who gathered up the little useless robes and shoes and toys, and hid them away from torturing sight till heaven's own balm was poured into those aching hearts? "Haven't you got a grandmother?" Alas! if only our grown-up follies and faults might always find as merciful judgment, how many whom harshness and severity have driven to despair and crime, were now to be found useful and happy members of society. FANNY FERN.

◆

EAST WINDS.

Although not easily disturbed by weather influences, we must confess to a rooted antipathy to easterly winds. Our northern springs are always prolific of them, and they have been particularly frequent and peculiarly inhospitable during the present season. One can easily account for the marrow-chilling tendency of the north-easterly gales that prevail in these latitudes. They blow from bleak Labrador, and foggy Newfoundland, and the frigid edges of the Arctic Circle. But it is not in northern climes alone that

> "A wind from the East
> Is neither good for man nor beast."

In warm latitudes airs from that direction seem always to have been considered insalubrious. An East wind blasted the seven ears of corn in Pharaoh's Dream. An East wind blew the Plague of Locusts into Egypt. Ezekiel's vine and Jonah's gourd were destroyed by East winds. The inter-tropical visitations from that quarter—the *Samiel* of Syria, the Kasrain of Egypt, and the *Simoom* of mid-Africa—are, however, hot winds. They bear upon their mephitic currents the Angel of Death. Yet it may well be doubted whether they are, upon the whole, more destructive than our own north-easters, surcharged as they are with the elements of consumption. The Simoom does its work swiftly, but our "Euroclydon" is perhaps equally fatal, though its effects are not so immediately apparent.

◆

—Should misfortune overtake, retrench—work harder—but never fly the track—confront difficulties with unflinching perseverance. Should you then fail, you will be honored; but shrink, and you will be despised.

◆

—A critic's head should be wise enough to form a right judgment, and his heart free enough to pronounce it.

◆

—If there has been no temptation, there can be no merit; if there has been no struggle, there can be no victory.

MY DARLING.

BY ALICE CARY.

When night has cast the moon in the sea,
And all is dark as dark can be,
Cast the moon in the sea, like a ring
Which a lady out of her window might fling
To her watching lover below;
There shineth a little light, sweet and clear,
And I say she is coming, my darling is near;
I know it is she, for the step I hear
Is as soft as snow on snow.

Sweetly it shineth, again and again;
In all my sorrow, through all my pain;
Asleep when alone with my dreams I lie,
In th' street with the great crowd sweeping by;
And I say to my sad soul, wait!
If our love be not the blackest of lies,
If Christ ever summoned the dead to rise,
And if any heaven be built in the skies,
She is there at the golden gate!

She is waiting me there, for she could not die;
I can think of the great Sea shriveling dry;
Of the Spring without her royal rose;
Of the day without its dawn or its close;
Of all that is good and fair,
Worn and wasted out of its place;
But when I have risen o'er time and space,
I find me nearer to God and his grace,
And my darling with me there.

◆

SELF-MADE;

OR,

"OUT OF THE DEPTHS."

BY MRS. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE HIDDEN HAND," "THE LOST HEIRESS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXII.

ISHMAEL GAINS HIS FIRST VERDICT.

Honor and shame, from no condition rise;
Act well your part, there all the honor lies.
Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow,
The rest is all but leather and prunella.
POPE.

So conjured Ishmael lifted his face and confronted his accusers. It was truth and intellect encountering falsehood and stupidity. Who could doubt the issue?

"Sir," said the boy, "if you will look into the pockets of that young gentleman, Master Alfred, you will find the stolen fruit upon him."

Alfred Burghe started and turned to run. But the gentleman was too quick to let him escape and caught him by the arm.

"What, sir! Mr. Middleton! would you search *me* at *his* bidding? Search the son of Commodore Burghe at the bidding of—*nobody's son?*" exclaimed the youth, struggling to free himself, while the blood seemed ready to burst from his red and swollen face.

"For your vindication, young sir! For your vindication," replied Mr. Middleton, proceeding to turn out the young gentleman's pockets, when lo! oranges, figs and nuts rolled upon the ground.

"It is infamous! so it is!" exclaimed Master Alfred, mad with shame and rage.

"Yes, it *is* infamous," sternly replied Mr. Middleton.

"I mean it is infamous to treat a commodore's son in this way!"

"And *I* mean it is infamous in *any* body's son to behave as you have, sir!"

"I bought the things at Nutt's shop! I bought them with my own money! They are mine! I never touched your things. *That* fellow did! he took them and then told falsehoods about it."

"Sir," said Ishmael, "if you will examine that bundle, lying under that bush, you will find something there to prove which of us two speaks the truth."

Master Alfred made a dash after the bundle; but again Mr. Middleton was too quick for him, and caught it up. It was a red bandanna silk handkerchief stuffed full of parcels and tied at the corners. The handkerchief had the name of Alfred Burghe on one corner; the small parcels of nuts and raisins it contained were at once recognized by Mr. Middleton as his own.

"Oh, sir! sir!" began that gentleman, severely, turning upon the detected culprit; but the young villain was at bay!

"Well?" he growled, in defiance—"what now? what's all the muss about? Those parcels were what I took off *his* person when he was running away with them. Didn't I, Ben?"

Ben grumbled some inaudible answer, which Alfred assumed to be an assent, for he immediately added:

"And I tied them up in my handkerchief to give them back to you. Didn't I, Ben?"

Ben mumbled something or other.

"And then I beat him for stealing. Didn't I, Ben?"

"Yes, you beat him," sulkily answered the younger brother.

Mr. Middleton gazed at the two boys in amazement; not that he entertained the slightest doubt of the innocence of Ishmael and the guilt of Alfred, but that he was simply struck with consternation at this instance of hardened juvenile depravity.

"Sir," continued the relentless young prosecutor, "if you will please to question Master Ben, I think he will tell you the truth. He has not told a down right story yet."

"What! why he has been corroborating his brother's testimony all along!" said Mr. Middleton.

"Only as to the assault, sir; not as to the theft. Please question him, sir, to finish this business."

"I will! Ben! Who stole the fruit and nuts from my carriage?"

Ben dug his hands into his pockets and turned sullenly away.

"Did this poor boy steal them? For if I find he did, I will send him to prison. And I know you wouldn't like to see an innocent boy sent to prison. So tell me the truth;—did he, or did he not, steal the articles in question?"

"He did *not*; not so much as one of them," replied the younger Burghe.

"Did Alfred take them?"

Ben was sullenly silent.

"Did Alfred take them?" repeated Mr. Middleton.

"I won't tell you! So there now! I told you *that fellow didn't!* but I won't tell you who did! It is real hard of you to want me to tell on my own brother!" exclaimed Master Ben, walking off indignantly.

"That is enough; indeed the finding of the articles upon Alfred's person was enough," said Mr. Middleton.

"I think this poor boy's word ought to have been enough!" said Claudia.

"And now, sir!" continued Mr. Middleton, turning to Master Burghe—"you have been convicted of theft, falsehood and cowardice—yes, and of the meanest falsehood and the basest cowardice I ever heard of. Under these circumstances, I cannot permit your future attendance upon my school. You are no longer a proper companion for my pupils. To-morrow I shall call upon your father, tell him what has happened and advise him to send you to sea, under some strict captain, for a three or a five years' cruize!"

"If you blow me to the Governor, I'll be shot to death if I don't *knife* you, old fellow!" roared the young reprobate.

"Begone, sir!" was the answer of Mr. Middleton.

"Oh, I can go! But you look out! You're all a set of radicals, anyhow! making equals of all the rag, tag and bobtail about. Look at Claudia there! What would Judge Merlin say if he was to see his daughter with her arm around *that* boy's neck!"

Claudia's eyes kindled dangerously, and she made one step towards the offender, saying:

"Hark you, Master Alfred Burghe. Don't you dare to take my name between your lips again! and don't you dare to come near me as long as you live, or even to say to anybody that you were ever acquainted with me! If you do I will make my papa have you hanged! For I do not choose to know a thief, liar and coward!"

"Claudia! Claudia! Claudia! You shock me, beyond all measure, my dear!" exclaimed the lady, in a tone of real pain, and then lowering her voice, she whispered—"'Thief, liar and coward!' what shocking words to issue from a young lady's lips."

"I know they are not nice words, Aunt Middleton, and if you will only teach me nicer ones I will use them instead. *But are there any pretty words for ugly tricks?*"

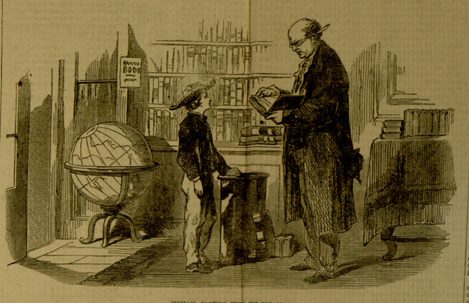
As this question was a "poser" that Mrs. Middleton did not attempt to answer, the little lady continued, very demurely:

"I will look in 'Webster' when I get home and see if there are."

"My boy," said Mr. Middleton, approaching our lad, "I have accused you wrongfully, I am very sorry for it and I beg your pardon."

Ishmael looked up in surprise and with an "Oh, sir! please don't," blushed and hung his head. It seemed really dreadful to this poor boy that this grave and dignified gentleman should ask *his* pardon! And yet Mr. Middleton lost no dignity in the simple act, because it was right; he had wronged the poor lad and owed an apology just as much as if he had wronged the greatest man in the country.

"And now, my boy," continued the gentleman, "be always as honest, as truthful and as fearless as you have shown yourself to-day, and though your lot in life may be very humble—aye, of the very humblest—yet you will be respected in your lowly sphere." Here the speaker opened his portmonaie and took from it a silver dollar, saying. "Take this, my boy, not as a reward for your integrity—*that*, understand, is a matter of more worth than to be rewarded with money—but simply as payment for your time and trouble in defending my property."



ISHMAEL PARTING WITH HIS TREASURE.

"Oh, sir, please don't. I really don't want the money," said Ishmael, shrinking from the offered coin.

"Oh, nonsense, my boy! You must be paid you know," said Mr. Middleton, urging the dollar upon him.

"But I do not want pay for a mere act of civility," persisted Ishmael, drawing back.

"But your time and trouble, child; they are money to lads in your line of life."

"If you please, sir, it was a holiday, and I had nothing else to do."

"But take this to oblige *me*."

"Indeed, sir, I don't want it. The Professor is very free-hearted and pays me well for my work."

"The Professor? What Professor, my boy? I thought *I* had the honor to be the only professor in the neighborhood," said the gentleman, smiling.

"I mean Professor Jim Morris, sir," replied Ishmael, in perfect good faith.

"Oh! yes, exactly; I have heard of that ingenious and useful individual, who seems to have served his time at all trades, and taken degrees in all arts and sciences; but I did not know he was called a Professor. So you are a student in his college!" smiled Mr. Middleton.

"I help him, sir, and he pays me," answered the boy.

"And what is your name, my good little fellow?"

"Ishmael Worth, sir."

"Oh, yes, exactly; you are the son of the little weaver up on Hut Hill, just across the valley from Brudenell Heights?"

"I am her nephew, sir."

"Are your parents living?"

"No, sir; I have been an orphan from my birth."

"Poor boy! And you are depending on your aunt for a home, and on your own labor for a support."

"Yes, sir."

"Well, Ishmael, as you very rightfully take pay from my brother professor, I do not know why you should refuse it from me."

Ishmael perhaps could not answer that question to his own satisfaction. At all events, he hesitated a moment before he replied:

"Why, you see sir, what I do for the other professor is all in the line of my business; but the small service I have just done for you is only a little bit of civility that I am always so glad to show to any gentleman—I mean to anybody at all, sir; even a poor wagoner, I often hold horses for them, sir! And, bless you, *they* couldn't pay me a penny."

"But *I* can, my boy! and besides you not only held my horse, and watered him, and rubbed him down, and watched my carriage, but you fought a stout battle in defence of my goods, and got yourself badly bruised by the thieves, and unjustly accused by me. Certainly, it is a poor offering I make in return for your services and sufferings in my interests. Here, my lad, I have thought better of it; here is a half eagle. Take it and buy something for yourself."

"Indeed, indeed, sir, I cannot. Please don't keep on asking me," persisted Ishmael, drawing back with a look of distress and almost of reproach on his fine face.

Now, why could not the little fellow take the money that was pressed upon him? He wanted it badly enough, Heaven knows! His best clothes were all patches, and this five dollar gold piece would have bought him a new suit. And besides there was an "Illustrated History of the United States" in that book-shop, that really and truly Ishmael would have been willing to give a finger off either of his hands to possess; and its price was just three dollars. Now, why didn't the little wretch take the money and buy the beautiful book with which his whole soul was enamored? The poor child did not know himself. But you and I know, reader; don't we? We know that he could not take that money, with the arm of that black-eyed little lady around his neck!

Yes, the arm of Claudia was still most tenderly and protectingly encircling his neck, and every few minutes she would draw down his rough head caressingly to her own damask cheek!

Shocking! wasn't it. And you wonder how her aunt and uncle could have stood by and permitted it. Because they couldn't help it! Miss Claudia was a little lady, angel born, who had never been contradicted in her life. Her father was a crotchetty old fellow, with a "theory," one result of which was, that he let his trees and his daughter grow unpruned as they liked.

But do not mistake Miss Claudia, or think her any better or any worse than she really was. Her caresses of the peasant boy looked as if she was republican in her principles and "fast" in her manners. She was neither the one nor the other. So far from being republican, she was just the most ingrained little aristocrat that ever lived! She was an aristocrat from the crown of her little, black, ringletted head to the sole of her tiny, gaitered foot; from her heart's core to her scarf-skin; so perfect an aristocrat that she was quite unconscious of being so. For instance, she looked upon herself as very little lower than the angels; and upon the working classes as very little higher than the brutes; if, in her heart, she acknowledged that all in the human shape *were* human, that was about the utmost extent of her liberalism. She and they were both clay to be sure, but she of the finest porcelain clay, and they of the coarsest potter's earth. This theory had not been taught her, it was born in her, and so entirely natural and sincere that she was almost unconscious of its existence; certainly unsuspicious of its fallacy.

Thus, you see, she caressed Ishmael, just exactly as she would have caressed her own Newfoundland dog; she defended his truth and honesty from false accusation, just as she would have defended Fido's from a similar charge; she praised his fidelity and courage just as she would have praised Fido's; for, in very truth, she rated the peasant-boy not one whit higher than the dog! Had she been a degree less proud, had she looked upon Ishmael as a human being with like passions and emotions as her own, she might have been more reserved in her manner. But being as proud as she was, she caressed and protected the noble peasant-boy as a kind-hearted little lady would have caressed and protected a noble specimen of the canine race! Therefore, what might have been considered very forward and lowering in another little lady, was perfectly graceful and dignified in Miss Merlin.

But, meanwhile, the poor, earnest, enthusiastic boy! *He* didn't know that she rated him as low as any four-footed pet! He thought she appreciated him, very highly too highly, as a human being! And his great little heart burned and glowed with joy and gratitude! And he would no more have taken pay for doing *her* uncle a service than he would have picked a pocket or robbed a hen-roost He just *adored* her lovely clemency, and he was even then turning over in his mind the problem how *he*, a poor, poor boy, hardly able to afford himself a half-penny candle to read by, after dark, could repay her kindness—what could he find, invent, or achieve to please her!

Of all this, Miss Claudia only understood his gratitude; and it pleased her as the gratitude of Fido might have done!

And she left his side for a moment, and raised herself on tiptoe and whispered to her uncle:

"Uncle, he *is* a noble fellow—isn't he, now? But he loves *me* better than he does *you!* So let *me* give him something."

Mr. Middleton silently placed the five dollar piece in her hand.

"No, no, no—not *that!* Don't you see it hurts his feelings to offer him *that?*"

"Well—but what then?"

"I'll tell you: When we drove up to 'Hamlin's,' I saw him standing before the shop, with his hands in his pockets, staring at the books in the windows, just as I have seen hungry children stare at the tarts and cakes in a pastry cook's. And I know he is hungry for a book! Now, uncle, let me give him a book."

"Yes; but had not *I* better give it to him, Claudia?"

"Oh, if you like, and he'll take it from you! But, you know, there's Fido now, who sometimes gets contrary, and won't take anything from *your* hand, but no matter how contrary he is, will always take anything from *mine!* But you may try, uncle—you may try."

This conversation was carried on in a whisper. When it was ended, Mr. Middleton turned to Ishmael, and said:

"Very well, my boy; I can but respect your scruples. Follow us back to 'Hamlin's.'"

And so saying, he helped his wife and his niece into the pony chaise, got in himself, and took the reins to drive on.

Miss Claudia looked back and watched Ishmael as he limped slowly and painfully after them. The distance was very short, and they soon reached the shop.

"Which is the window he was looking in, Claudia?" inquired Mr. Middleton.

"This one on the left hand, uncle."

"Ah! Come here, my boy; look into this window now, and tell me which of these books you would advise me to buy for a present to a young friend of mine?"

The poor fellow looked up with so much perplexity in his face at the idea of this grave, middle-aged gentleman asking advice of *him*, that Mr. Middleton hastened to say:

"The reason I ask you, Ishmael, is because, *you* being a boy, would be a better judge of another's boy's tastes than an old man like *me* could be. So now judge by yourself, and tell me which book you think would please my young friend best. Look at them all, and take time."

"Oh, yes, sir. But I don't want time! Anybody could tell in a minute which book a boy would like!"

"Which, then?"

"Oh, this! this! this!—'History of the United States,' all full of pictures!"

"But—here is Robinson Crusoe, and here is the Arabian Nights; why not choose one of them?"

"*Oh, no, sir—don't! They are about people that never lived, and things that are n't true; and though they are very interesting, I know, there is no solid satisfaction in them like there is in this——*"

"Well, now '*this*.' What is the great attraction of this to a boy? Why, it's nothing but dry history," said Mr. Middleton, with an amused smile, while he tried to "pump" the poor lad.

"Oh, sir, but there's so much in it! There's Captain John Smith, and Sir Walter Raleigh, and Jamestown, and Plymouth, and the Pilgrim Fathers, and John Hancock, and Patrick Henry, and George Washington, and the Declaration of Independence, and Bunker's Hill, and Yorktown! Oh!!" cried Ishmael, with an ardent burst of enthusiasm.

"You seem to know already a deal more of the history of our country than some of my first class young gentlemen have taken the trouble to learn," said Mr. Middleton, in surprise.

"Oh, no, I don't, sir. I know no more than what I have read in a little thin book, no bigger than your hand, sir, that was lent to me by the Professor; but I know by that how much good there must be in *this*, sir."

"Ah! a taste of the dish has made you long for a feast."

"Sir?"

"Nothing, my boy, but that I shall follow your advice in the selection of a book," said the gentleman, as he entered the shop.

The lady and the little girl remained in the carriage, and Ishmael stood feasting his hungry eyes upon the books in the window.

Presently the volume he acquired so much disappeared.

"There! I shall never see it any more!" said Ishmael, with a sigh; "but I'm glad some boy is going to get it! Oh, won't he be happy to-night, though! Wish it was I! No I don't, neither; it's a sin to covet!"

And a few minutes after the gentleman emerged from the shop with an oblong packet in his hand.

"It was the last copy he had left, my boy, and I have secured it! Now, do you really think my young friend will like it?" asked Mr. Middleton.

"Oh, sir, won't he though, neither!" exclaimed Ishmael, in sincere hearty sympathy with the prospective happiness of another.

"Well, then, my little friend must take it," said Mr. Middleton, offering the packet to Ishmael.

"Sir!" exclaimed the latter.

"It is for *you*, my boy."

"Oh, sir, I couldn't take it, indeed! It is only another way of paying me for a common civility," said Ishmael, shrinking from the gift, yet longing for the book.

"It is not; it is a testimonial of my regard for you, my boy! Receive it as such."

"I do not deserve such a testimonial and can not receive it, sir," persisted Ishmael.

"There, uncle, I told you so!" exclaimed Miss Claudia, springing from the carriage and taking the book from the hand of Mr. Middleton.

She went to the side of Ishmael, put her arm around his neck, drew his head down against hers, leaned her bright cheek against his, and said:

"Come, now, take the book; I know you want it; take it like a good boy; take it for my sake."

Still Ishmael hesitated a little.

Then she raised the parcel and pressed it to her lips and handed it to him again, saying:

"There, now, you see I've kissed it. Fido would take anything I kissed; won't you?"

Ishmael now held out his hands eagerly for the prize, took it and pressed to his jacket, exclaiming, awkwardly but earnestly:

"Thank you, Miss! Oh, thank you a thousand, thousand times, Miss! You don't know how much I wanted this book and how glad I am!"

"Oh, yes, I do. I'm a witch, and know people's secret thoughts. But why didn't you take the book when uncle offered it?"

"If you are a witch, Miss, you can tell."

"So I can; it was because you don't love uncle as well as you love me! Well, Fido doesn't either. But uncle is a nice man for all that."

"I wonder who 'Fido' is," thought the poor boy. "I do wonder who he is; her brother, I suppose."

"Come Claudia, my love, get into the carriage; we must go home," said Mr. Middleton, as he assisted his niece to her seat.

"I thank you very much, sir, for this beautiful book," said Ishmael, going up to Mr. Middleton and taking off his hat.

"You are very welcome, my boy; so run home now and enjoy it," replied the gentleman, as he sprang into the carriage and took the reins.

"'Run home?' how can he run home, uncle? If he lives at the weaver's it is four miles off! How can he run it, or even walk it? Don't you see how badly hurt he is? Why, he could scarcely limp from the pond to the shop! I think it would be only kind, uncle, to take him up beside you. We pass close by the hut, you know, in going home, and we could set him down.

"Come along, then, my little fellow! The young princess says you are to ride home with us, and her highness's wishes are not to be disobeyed!" laughed Mr. Middleton, holding out his hand to help the boy into the carriage.

Ishmael made no objection to this proposal; but eagerly clambered up to the offered seat beside the gentleman.

The reins were moved, and they set off at a spanking pace, and were soon bowling along the turnpike road that made a circuit through the forest toward Brudenell Heights.

The sun had set, a fresh breeze had sprung up, and, as they were driving rapidly in the eye of the wind, there was scarcely opportunity for conversation. In little more than an hour they reached a point in the road within a few hundred yards of the weaver's hut.

"Here we are, my boy! Now, do you think you can get home without help?" inquired Mr. Middleton, as he stopped the carriage.

"Oh, yes, sir, thank you!" replied Ishmael, as he clambered down to the ground. He took off his hat beside the carriage, and making his best Sabbath School bow, said:

"Good evening, sir; good evening Madam and Miss; and thank you very much."

"Good evening, my little man; there get along home with you out of the night air," said Mr. Middleton.

Mrs. Middleton and the little lady nodded and smiled their adieux.

And Ishmael struck into the narrow and half hidden foot-path that led from the highway to the hut.

The carriage started on its way.

"A rather remarkable boy that," said Mr. Middleton, as they drove along the forest road encircling the crest of the hills towards Brudenell Heights, that moonlit, dewy evening; "a rather remarkable boy! He has an uncommonly fine head! I should really like to examine it! The intellectual and moral organs seem wonderfully developed! I really *should* like to examine it carefully at my leisure."

"He has a fine face, if it were not so pale and thin," said Mrs. Middleton.

"Poor, poor fellow," said Claudia, in a tone of deep pity, "he *is* thin and pale, isn't he? And Fido is so fat and sleek! I'm afraid he doesn't get enough to eat, Uncle!"

"Who, Fido?"

"No, the other one, the boy! I say I'm afraid he don't get enough to eat. Do *you* think he does?"

"I—I'm afraid not, my dear!"

"Then I think it is a shame, uncle! Rich people ought not to let the poor, who depend upon them, starve! Papa says that I am to come into my mamma's fortune as soon as I am eighteen. When I do, nobody in this world shall want. Everybody shall have as much as ever they can eat three times a day. Won't *that* be nice?"

"Magnificent, my little princess, if you can only carry out your ideas," replied her uncle.

"Oh! but I *will!* I will, if it takes every dollar of my income! My mamma told me that when I grew up I must be the mother of the poor! And doesn't a mother feed her children?"

Middleton laughed.

"And as for that poor boy on the hill, he shall have tarts and cheese-cakes, and plum-pudding, and roast turkey and new books every day; because I *like* him; I like him so much; I like him better than I do anything in the world except Fido!"

"Well, my dear," said Mr. Middleton, seizing this opportunity of administering an admonition, "like him as well as Fido, if you please; but do not *pet* him quite as freely as you pet Fido."

"But I *will*, if I choose to! Why shouldn't I?" inquired the young lady, erecting her haughty little head.

"Because he is not a *dog!*" dryly answered her uncle.

"Oh! but he likes petting just as much as Fido! He does indeed, uncle; I assure you! Oh, I noticed *that*."

"Nevertheless, Miss Claudia, I must object in future to your making a pet of the poor boy whether you or he like it or not."

"But I *will*, if I choose!" persisted the little princess, throwing back her head and shaking all her ringlets.

Mr. Middleton sighed, shook his head, and turned to his wife, whispering, in a low tone:

"What are we to do with this self-willed elf? To carry out her father's ideas, and let her nature have unrestrained freedom to develope itself, will be to ruin her! Unless she is controled and guided, she is just the girl to grow up wild and eccentric, and end in running away with her own footman."

These words were not intended for Miss Claudia's ears; but, notwithstanding, or rather, because of that, she heard every syllable, and immediately fired up, exclaiming:

"Who are you talking of marrying a footman? me! *me!* ME!! Do you think that *I* would ever marry any one beneath me? No, indeed! I will live to be an old maid, before I will marry anybody but a lord! that I am determined upon!"

"You will never reach that consummation of your hopes, my dear, by petting a peasant boy, even though you do look upon him as little better than a dog," said Mr. Middleton, as he drew up before the gates of Brudenell.

A servant was in attendance to open them.

And as the party were now at home, the conversation ceased for the present.

Claudia ran in to exhibit her purchases.

Her favorite, Fido, ran to meet her, barking with delight.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ISHMAEL'S PROGRESS.

> Athwart his face when blushes pass
> To be so poor and weak,
> He falls into the dewy grass,
> To cool his fevered cheek;
> And hears a music strangely made,
> That you have never heard
> A sprite in every rustling blade,
> That sings like any bird!
>
> MONCKTON MILNES.

Meanwhile on that fresh, dewy, moonlight summer evening, along the narrow path leading through the wood behind the hut, Ishmael limped—the happiest little fellow, despite his wounds and bruises, that ever lived. He was so happy, that he half suspected his delight to be all unreal, and feared to wake up presently and find it was but a dream, and see the little black-eyed girl, the ride in the carriage, and above all the new "Illustrated History of the United States" vanish into the land of shades!

In this dazed frame of mind he reached the hut and opened the door.

The room was lighted only by the blazing logs of a woodfire, which the freshness of the late August evening on the hills made not quite unwelcome.

The room was in no respect changed in the last twelve years. The well cared for though humble furniture was still in its old position.

Hannah, as of old, was seated at her loom, driving the shuttle back and forth with a deafening clatter. Hannah's face was a little more sallow and wrinkled, and her hair a little more freely streaked with gray than of yore: that was all the change visible in her personal appearance. But long continued solitude had rendered her as taciturn and unobservant as if she had been born deaf and blind.

She had not seen Reuben Gray since that Sunday when Ishmael was christened, and Reuben insisted on bringing the child home; and when, in the bitterness of her woe and her shame, she had slammed the door in his face. Gray had left the neighborhood, and it was reported that he had been promoted to the management of a rich farm in the Forest of Prince George's.

"There is your supper on the hearth, child," she said, without ceasing her work, or turning her head, as Ishmael entered.

Hannah was a good aunt; but she was not his mother; if she had been, she would at least have turned around to look at the boy, and then she would have seen he was hurt, and would have asked an explanation. As it was she saw nothing.

And Ishmael was very glad of it. He did not wish to be pitied or praised; he wished to be left to himself and his own devices, for this evening at least, when he had such a distinguished guest as his grand new book to entertain!

Ishmael took up his bowl of mush and milk, sat down, and with a large spoon shoveled his food down his throat with more dispatch than delicacy—just as he would have shoveled coal into a cellar! The sharp cries of a hungry stomach must be appeased, he knew; but with as little loss of time as possible, particularly when there was a hungry brain waiting to set to work upon a rich feast already prepared for it!

So in three minutes he put away his bowl and spoon, drew his three-legged stool to the corner of the fire-place, where he could see to read, seated himself, opened his packet, and displayed his treasure. It was a large, thick, octavo volume, bound in stout leather, and filled with portraits and pictured battle scenes. And on the fly-leaf was written:

"Presented to Ishmael Worth, as a reward of merit, by his friend, James Middleton."

Ishmael read that with a new accession of pleasure. Then he turned the leaves to peep at the hidden jewels in this intellectual casket. Then he closed the book and laid it on his knees and shut his eyes and held his breath for joy.

He had been enamoured of this beauty for months and months. He had fallen in love with it at first sight, when he had seen its pages open, with a portrait of George Washington on the right and a picture of the Battle of Yorktown on the left, all displayed in the show window of Hamlin's book shop. He had loved it and longed for it with a passionate ardor ever since. He had spent all his half holidays in going to Baymouth and standing before Hamlin's window, and staring at the book, and asking the price of it, and wondering if he should ever be able to save money enough to buy it. Now, to be in love with an unattainable woman is bad enough, the dear knows! But to be in love with an unattainable book —— Oh, my gracious! Lover-like, he had thought of this book all day, and dreamt of it all night; but never hoped to possess it!

And now he really owned it! He had won it as a reward for courage, truth and honesty! It was lying there on his knees. It was all his own! His intense satisfaction can only be compared to that of a youthful bridegroom who has got his beloved all to himself at last! It might have been said of the one, as it is often said of the other—"It was the happiest day of his life!"

Oh, doubtless, in after years the future statesman enjoyed many a hard won victory. Sweet is the breath of fame! Sweet the praise of nations! But I question whether, in all the vicissitudes, successes, failures, trials and triumphs of his future life, Ishmael Worth ever tasted such keen joy as he did this night in the possession of this book!

He enjoyed it more than wealthy men enjoy their great libraries. To him, this was the book of books, because it was the history of his own country.

There were thousands and thousands of young men, sons of gentlemen, in schools and colleges, reading this glorious history of the young republic, as a task, with indifference or disgust, while this poor boy, in the hill-top hut, pored over its pages with all the enthusiasm of reverence and love! And why? what caused this difference? Because *they* were of the common-place, while he was one in a million. This was the history of the rise and progress of the United States; Ishmael Worth was an ardent lover and worshipper of his country, as well as of all that was great and good! He had the brain to comprehend and the heart to reverence the divine idea embodied in the Federal Union. He possessed these, not by inheritance, not by education, but by the direct inspiration of Heaven, who, passing over the wealthy and the prosperous, ordained this poor outcast boy, this despised illegitimate son of a country weaver, to become a great Power among the People! a great Pillar of the State!

No one could guess this now. Not even the boy himself! *He* did not know that he was any richer in heart or brain than other boys of his age. No, most probably, by analogy, he thought himself, in this respect as well as in all others, poorer than his neighbors. He covered his book carefully, and studied it perseveringly; studied it not only while it was a novelty, but after he had grown familiar with its incidents.

I have dwelt so long upon this subject because the possession of this book at this time had a signal effect in forming Ishmael Worth's character and directing the current of the boy's whole future life. It was one of the first media of his inspiration. Its heroes, its warriors and its statesmen were his idols, his models and his examplars. By studying them he became himself high-toned, chivalrous and devoted. Through the whole autumn he worked hard all day, upheld with the prospect of returning home at night to—his poor hut and his silent aunt?—oh, no, but to the grand stage upon which the Revolutionary struggle was exhibited and to the company of its heroes—Washington, Putnam, Marion, Jefferson, Hancock and Henry! He saw no more for sometime of his friends at Brudenell Hall. He knew that Mr. Middleton had a first-class school at his house, and he envied the privileged young gentlemen who had the happiness to attend it; little knowing how *un*enviable a privilege the said young gentlemen considered that attendance and how small a portion of happiness they derived from it.

The winter sat in early and severely. Hannah took a violent cold and was confined to her bed with inflammatory rheumatism. For many weeks she was unable to do a stroke of work. During this time of trial Ishmael worked for both—rising very early in the morning to get the frugal breakfast and set the house in order before going out to his daily occupation of "jobbing" with the Professor;—and coming home late at night to get the supper and to split the wood and bring the water for the next day's supply. Thus as long as his work lasted, he was the provider as well as the nurse of his poor aunt.

But at last there came one of the heaviest falls of snow ever known in that region. It lay upon the ground for many weeks, quite blocking up the roads, interrupting travel, and of course putting a stop to the Professor's jobbing and to Ishmael's income. Provisions were soon exhausted and there was no way of getting more. Hannah and Ishmael suffered hunger. Ishmael bore this with great fortitude. Hannah also bore it patiently as long as the TEA lasted. But when that woman's consolation failed, she broke down and complained bitterly.

The Baymouth turnpike was about the only passable road in the neighborhood. By it Ishmael walked on to the village, one bitter cold morning, to try to get credit for a quarter of a pound of tea.

But Nutt would see him hanged first.

Disappointed and sorrowful, Ishmael turned his steps from the town. He had come about a mile on his homeward road, when something glowing like a coal of fire on the glistening whiteness of the snow caught his eye.

It was a red morocco pocket-book lying in the middle of the road. There was not a human creature except Ishmael himself on the road or anywhere in sight. Neither had he passed any one on his way from the village. Therefore it was quite in vain that he looked up and down and all around for the owner of the pocket-book as he raised it from the ground. No possible claimant was to be seen. He opened it and examined its contents. It contained a little gold and silver, not quite ten dollars in all; but a fortune for Ishmael, in his present needy condition. There was no name on the pocket-book and not a scrap of paper in it by which the owner might be discovered. There was nothing in it but the untraceable silver and gold. It seemed to have dropped from Heaven for Ishmael's own benefit! This was his thought as he turned with the impulse to fly directly back to the village and invest a portion of the money in necessaries for Hannah.

What was it that suddenly arrested his steps? The recollection that the money was not his own! that to use it even for the best purpose in the world would be an act of dishonesty.

He paused and reflected. The devil took that opportunity to tempt him—whispering:

"You found the pocket-book and you cannot find the owner; therefore it is your own, you know."

"You know it isn't," murmured Ishmael's conscience.

"Well, even so, it is no harm to borrow a dollar or two to get your poor sick aunt a little tea and sugar. You could pay it back again before the pocket-book is claimed, even if it is ever claimed," mildly insinuated the devil.

"It would be borrowing without leave," replied conscience.

"But for your poor, sick, suffering aunt! think of her, and make her happy this evening with a consoling cup of tea! Take only half a dollar for that good purpose. Nobody could blame you for *that*," whimpered the devil, who was losing ground.

"I would like to make dear Aunt Hannah happy to-night. But I am sure George Washington would not approve of my taking what don't belong to me for that or any other purpose. And neither would Patrick Henry, nor John Hancock. And so I won't do it," said Ishmael, resolutely putting the pocket-book in his vest pocket and buttoning his coat tight over it, and starting at a brisk pace homeward.

You see his heroes had come to his aid and saved him in the first temptation of his life.

Ah, you may be sure that in after days the rising politician met and resisted many a temptation to sell his vote, his party, or his soul, for a "consideration;" but none more serious to the man than this one was to the boy.

When Ishmael had trudged another mile of his homeward road, it suddenly occurred to him that he might possibly meet or overtake the owner of the pocket-book, who would know his property in a moment if he should see it. And with this though the took it from his pocket and carried it conspicuously in his hand until he reached home, without having met a human being.

It was about twelve meridian, when he lifted the latch and entered. Hannah was in bed; but she turned her hungry eyes anxiously on him—as she eagerly inquired:

"Did you bring the tea, Ishmael?"

"No, aunt Hannah; Mr. Nutt wouldn't trust me," replied the boy, sadly, sinking down in a chair; for he was very weak from insufficient food, and the long walk had exhausted him.

Hannah began to complain pitiously. Do not blame her, reader! *You* would fret, too, if you were sick in bed, and longing for a cup of tea, without having the means of procuring it.

To divert her thoughts, Ishmael went and showed the pocket-book, and told her the history of his finding it.

Hannah seized it with the greedy grasp with which the starving catch at money. She opened it, and counted the gold and silver.

"Where did you say you found it, Ishmael?"

"I told you a mile out of the village."

"Only that little way! Why didn't you go back and buy my tea?" she inquired, with an injured look.

"Oh, Aunt! the money wasn't mine, you know!" said Ishmael.

"Well, I don't say it was. But you might have borrowed a dollar from it, and the owner would never have minded, for I dare say he'd be willing to give two dollars as a reward for finding the pocket-book. You might have bought my tea if you had cared for me! But nobody cares for me now! No one ever did but Reuben—poor fellow!"

"Indeed, aunt Hannah, I do care for you a great deal! I love you dearly; and I *did* want to take some of the money and buy your tea."

"Why didn't you do it, then?"

"Oh, Aunt Hannah, the Lord has commanded, 'Thou shalt not steal.'"

"It wouldn't have been stealing; it would have been borrowing."

"But I know Patrick Henry and John Hancock wouldn't have borrowed what didn't belong to them!"

"Plague take Patrick Hancock and John Henry, I say! I believe they are turning your head! What have the dead and buried old people to do with folks that are alive and starving?"

"Oh, Aunt Hannah! scold me as much as you please, but don't speak so of the great men!" said Ishmael, to whom all this was sheer blasphemy and nothing less.

"Great fiddlesticks' ends! No tea yesterday, and no tea for breakfast this morning, and no tea for supper to-night! And I laying helpless with the rheumatism, and feeling as faint as if I should sink and die! and my head aching ready to burst! And I would give anything in the world for a cup of tea, because I know it would do me so much good, and I can't get it! And you have money in your pocket and won't buy it for me! No, not if I die for the want of it! You, that I have been a mother to! That's the way you pay me for it, for all my care?"

"Oh, Aunt Hannah, dear, I do love you, and I would do anything in the world for you; but, indeed I am sure Patrick Henry——"

"Hang Patrick Henry! If you mention his name to me again I'll box your ears!"

Ishmael dropped his eyes to the ground and sighed deeply.

"After all I have done for you, ever since you were left a helpless brat on my hands, for you to let me lie here and die, yes, actually die for the want of a cup of tea, before you will spend one quarter of a dollar to get it for me! Oh! Oh! Oh! Oo-oo-oo!"

And Hannah put up her hands to her face, and cried like a baby.

You see Hannah was honest; but she was not heroic; her nerves were very weak, and her spirits very low. Inflammatory rheumatism is often more or less complicated with heart-disease. And the latter is a great demoralizer of mind as well as body. And that was Hannah's case. We must make every excuse for the weakness of the poor, over-tasked, all-enduring, long-suffering woman, broken-down at last.

But not a thought of blaming her entered Ishmael's mind. Full of love, he bent over her, saying:

"Oh, Aunt Hannah, don't, don't cry! You shall have your tea this very evening; indeed you shall!" And he stooped and kissed her tenderly.

Then he put on his cap and went and took his only treasure, his beloved "History," from its place of honor on the top of the bureau; and cold, hungry and tired as he was, he set off again to walk the four long miles to the village, to try to sell his book for half price to the trader.

Reader! I am not fooling you with a fictitious character here. Do you not love this boy? And will you not forgive me if I have already lingered too long over the trials and triumphs of his friendless but heroic boyhood! He who in his feeble childhood resists small temptations, and makes small sacrifices, is very apt in his strong manhood to conquer great difficulties and achieve great successes.

Ishmael, with his book under his arm, went as fast as his exhausted frame would permit him on the road toward Baymouth. But as he was obliged to walk slowly, and pause to rest frequently, he made but little progress, so that it was three o'clock in the afternoon before he reached Hamlin's Book Shop.

There was a customer present, and Ishmael had to wait until the man was served and had departed, before he could mention his own humble errand. This short interview Ishmael spent in taking the brown paper cover off his book, and looking fondly at the cherished volume. It was like taking a leave of it. Do not blame this as a weakness. He was so poor, so very poor; this book was his only treasure and his only joy in life. Two tears arose to his eyes, but he kept them from falling.

When the customer was gone, and the bookseller was at leisure, Ishmael approached and laid the volume on the counter, saying:

"Have you another copy of this work in the shop, Mr. Hamlin?"

"No; I wish I had half-a-dozen; for I could sell them all; but I intend to order some from Baltimore to-day."

"Then maybe you would buy this one back from me at half price? I have taken such care of it, that it is as good as new you see. Look at it for yourself."

"Yes, I see it looks perfectly fresh; but here is some writing on the fly leaf; that would have to be torn out you know; so that the book could never be sold as a new one again; I should have to sell it as a second hand one, at half price; that would be a dollar and a half, so that you see *I* would only give you a dollar for it."

"Sir?" questioned Ishmael, in sad amazement.

"Yes; because, you know, I must have my own little profit on it."

"Oh, I see; yes, to be sure," assented Ishmael, with a heavy sigh.

But to part with his treasured volume and get no more than that! It was like Esau selling his birth-right for a mess of pottage.

However, the poor cannot argue with the prosperous. The bargain was soon struck. The book was sold and the boy received his dollar. And then the dealer feeling a twinge of conscience, gave him a dime in addition.

"Thank you, sir; I will take this out in paper and wafers, if you please. I want some particularly," said Ishmael.

Having received a half dozen sheets of paper and a small box of wafers, the lad asked the loan of pen and ink, and then, standing at the counter, he wrote a dozen circulars as follows:

FOUND, A POCKET-BOOK.

ON THE BAYMOUTH TURNPIKE ROAD, ON FRIDAY MORNING, I PICKED UP A POCKET-BOOK, WHICH THE OWNER CAN HAVE BY COMING TO ME AT THE HILL HUT AND PROVING HIS PROPERTY.

ISHMAEL WORTH.

Having finished these, he thanked the bookseller and left the shop, saying to himself:

"I won't keep *that* about me much longer to be a constant temptation and cross."

He first went and bought a quarter of a pound of tea, a pound of sugar, and a bag of meal, from Nutt's general shop, for Hannah; and leaving them there until he should have got through his work, he went around the village and wafered up his twelve posters at various conspicuous points on fences, walls, pumps, trees, etc.

Then he called for his provisions, and set out on his long walk home.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

* * *

—"Friend Franklin," said Myers Fisher, a celebrated lawyer of Philadelphia, one day, to our immortal philosopher and statesman, "thee knows almost everything, can thee tell me how I am to preserve my small beer in the back yard? My neighbors are often tapping it of nights." "Put a barrel of old Madeira by the side of it," replied the doctor; "let the rogues but get a taste of that, and I warrant they'll never touch your small beer any more."

* * *

—La Fontaine was one of the most absent-minded of men. We are told that he once attended the funeral of a friend, and shortly afterwards called to visit him, when the servant informed him his master was dead. La Fontaine was at first very much shocked, but recovering from his surprise, observed, "It is true enough, for now I recollect I was out to his burial."

HOUSE-HUNTING.

TOM ASHE'S DILEMMA.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

"There's no use saying another word on the subject, Tom; my mind is made up! Either you must go and engage a house *somewhere* this morning, or you must stay and take care of the baby, while I do it!"

"I'll go and look for the house," said Thomas Ashe, recklessly rising and taking up his hat.

"That's a darling, Tom!" said Mrs. Ashe. And she gave his shirt-collar an upward twitch, and pulled the bow of his cravat straight, and stood on tip-toe to arrange his hair, and then—we'd like to know whose business it was if the cherry lips *did* leave a little, soft, fragrant touch somewhere in the vicinity of Tom's moustache!

Thus he went on his way, not exactly rejoicing, but what is next best, resigned

"Is this house to let?"

"Yes, it is," said Mrs. Starpen, wringing the soap-suds from her sodden fingers (it was Monday morning) and administering a series of cuffs to the little Starpens, who were skirmishing in the entry.

"Will you be kind enough to allow me to look at it?"

"You won't like it!" said Mrs. Starpen, oracularly.

"No? why not?"

"Well, the sullers is full o' water; and the roof leaks; and the range is out o' order; and the kitchen's swarm full o' rats; and——"

"O, dear, dear!" quoth simple Tom, in dismay, "it won't do at all! Very much obliged to you for mentioning these things, ma'am!"

"O, not at all!" said Mrs. Starpen, shutting the door, and adding, in a soliloquizing vein: "What business have folks comin' before ten o'clock in the mornin', then?"

Mr. Ashe consulted his list. The next house was not far off, and he resolved to try again.

"I believe this residence is for rent," he said, varying his question to suit the appearance of a faded, fine lady, who put her head out of one of the windows after a long interval.

"Yes!"

"May I look at it?"

"No!"

Tom staggered back, for the negative had been hurled at him with the force of a Minnie ball.

"No? If I might venture to ask——"

"'Tain't hours!"

"Hours!" repeated Tom, vaguely.

"The house is visible from two to three only."

"But, ma'am——"

Down went the window with a sharp report, and our discomfited hero sneaked down the steps, mentally execrating the institution of "hours."

As he stood hesitating on the pavement, uncertain whither next to bend his steps, his eye caught a "bill" on a trim, little, brown-stone house opposite—a house with dainty white draperies at the windows, overshadowing monthly roses in full crimson bloom.

"I'll try there!" ejaculated Tom, as if visited by an inspiration.

He ascended the steps, and boldly rung the bell.

"I see there is a bill on this house."

"Yes, sir; plase walk in and spake to the missus."

Tom followed the serving-lass into a bright, neat, little parlor, where a lady in black, with mischievous eyes to correspond, and hair ditto, was clipping dead leaves off her plants with a fairy pair of scissors. She turned, and Mr. Ashe bowed.

"This house is to let?"

"Yes," said the black-eyed, dropping her lashes pensively. "It is too large, and—pardon me—too expensive, since my poor, dear husband's death, for me to retain."

Tom didn't know what else to say, so he remarked:

"Ah, indeed!"

"Would you like to look at it?"

"If perfectly convenient."

Well, it *was* a pretty house—neat and complete in all its appointments as the dainty widow herself. Tom felt as if he were approaching the termination of his trials at last.

"The wine-cellars—poor Henry used to be *so* particular about his claret and sherry—furnace—rooms—all in perfect order; kitchen——"

"Yes, I see," said Tom, kneeling down to squint scientifically into the range-ovens—a manœuvre that might serve to blind the lady to his total ignorance on culinary subjects.

"It's all right—bakes charmingly," said the widow, sighing sweetly. "Henry was rather exact about pies and puddings, and——"

"What did you tell me the rent was, ma'am?"

"Nine hundred dollars."

"Not dear, certainly," said Tom, complacently. "No incumbrances, I suppose."

"No," said the widow, dimpling and blushing, "none but myself!"

"Yourself!" echoed Tom, blankly.

"I'm not particular in my choice of rooms," smiled the widow; "your wishes would of course be my guide."

Tom stared at her in speechless dismay.

"I don't think you'd find me *very* disagreeable," went on the lady, playing with the wide strings of her very becoming widow's cap. "It's only a few months, to be sure, since dear Henry died, but I try to keep up my spirits, and——"

"There's some mistake here!" gasped Tom, a clammy sweat breaking out around the roots of his hair at the idea of being taken violent possession of by a widow. "I assure you, ma'am, I do not want you!"

"Not want me!" shrieked the widow. "Did you not come from the agent? wasn't it the understanding that I—I was to be—to be inclu-u-u-ded?"

Here the widow broke into a storm of hysteric sobs and tears, drowning Tom's vehement assurances that he had seen no agent, nor if he had, should he have entered into any such absurd compact. The more he reasoned the louder she sobbed, and at length, in despair, he retreated, plunging down stairs at the rate of four steps at a time! Not until he was a full block's distance from the "brown-stone front" did he venture to stop for breath.

"The idea!" he faltered. "*Me*, a man with a wife at home! Are people to be married by force in this age of the world? Do the laws afford a man no protection, save that of abject flight? I'll tell Mattie the whole story, and see if she'll send me house-hunting again in a hurry."

And he did! Bolting in upon the astounded Mattie, he related his hair-breadth escape, pausing ever and anon to wipe the cold perspiration from his brow.

"And it's the greatest wonder I know of," he ended, "that she didn't lock me up in the wine-cellar at once, and keep me a prisoner of war! Yes, laugh, Mattie! but it's no laughing matter, I can tell you!"

For Mattie was convulsed with merriment.

"You dear, stupid Tom!" said she, "you're not worth a fig to hunt houses! Here—give me the list, and you stay with baby. Don't be alarmed—he's fast asleep. *I'll* arrange matters."

Away trotted Mattie Ashe, with a face of resolution that made Tom tremble for the consequences in case she should happen to encounter the rosy widow.

"Let 'em fight their own battles! *I* wash my hands of it!" muttered he, rendered desperate!

In less than an hour, Mrs. Ashe returned, blooming and jubilant.

"Well?" questioned Tom.

"I've engaged a house!" she said, untying her bonnet strings.

"Where?"

"The brown-stone house in —— street!"

"Not the one——"

"Yes, the one with the widow. I've consented to 'include' her, Tom!"

Tom said nothing—speech had failed him. He only stared vacantly at his wife.

"Now don't look so stupid, you precious, old, blundering darling! You and the widow were talking at cross-purposes the whole time. All she wanted was the privilege of keeping two or three rooms on the third floor—and the house was so nice and cheap, I consented at once!"

Tom sat silent a moment or two.

"I say, Mat?"

"Well."

"You didn't tell the widow what I thought?"

"No—of course, I didn't! But," added Mattie, with roguish eyes, "I rather think I have a nice little sword to hold over your head, if you ever venture to allude to my old beaux!"

Tom did not reply, but in his inmost heart he registered a secret vow, never again to go house-hunting!

* * *

WARP AND WEFT;

OR,

THE COTTON FAMINE.

A TALE OF MANCHESTER LIFE.

BY J. F. SMITH,

AUTHOR OF "THE SOLDIER OF FORTUNE," "DICK TARLETON," "THE STEP MOTHER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

> Shall they who humbly trod the path of truth,
> Not reap in age the harvest of their youth?
> Men who for bread their daily labor gave,
> In poverty and sorrow seek the grave?
> Childhood's wan looks, and woman's mute despair,
> Not find an answer to their silent prayer?
> Forbid it, Thou! who to the human heart
> Didst all life's generous sympathies impart—
> The open hand; the pity of distress;
> The impulse to relieve the fatherless:
> Those perfect parts of an imperfect whole,
> Those mortal signs of an immortal soul!
>
> AUTHOR'S SCRAP BOOK.

It is impossible for those who are in the habit of mixing with the poor, visiting them in their humble abodes, and listening to their sorrows, to avoid noticing the strong sympathy they evince for the misfortunes of each other. Any very severe or unusual calamity falling upon one is felt by many. We have known those whose life was a continued struggle with privations, under such circumstances, give, not from their abundance, but their necessities—bring their little offering freely, bestow it kindly, accompanied by words of gentleness and compassion, soothing the sufferings they could only partially alleviate.

When symptoms of distress first appeared in the Lancashire districts the hands bore it bravely. The prudent fell back upon the savings-banks, quietly and uncomplainingly withdrew their little hoards—fruits of a hard but wise economy; the thoughtless had recourse to the pawnbroker, sold or pledged their furniture and wearing apparel; the utterly reckless only descended to beggary or the poor-house. The manhood, the nerve, the muscle and sinew of Lancashire suffered in silence; and it was not till mill after mill had been closed, every resource exhausted, and the iron teeth of famine began gnawing into their very souls, that the cry for assistance echoed through the land—made itself heard in every English home—found its way to distant colonies. All classes performed their duty—skilled and unskilled laborers did their part—widows and children contributed their mite.

God saw that the work was good, and prospered it.

Never in the memory of man has the unity of feeling been more complete. There was no difference of opinion as to the necessity of finding relief, although some disputed the mode of applying it.

The cotton famine has presented a touching, but, at the same time, a noble spectacle—a lesson we may well feel proud of. Charity, armed with the cry of "Our operatives are starving!" knocked boldly at the palace gates, the residence of the noble, the counting-house of the banker and merchant, the shop of the tradesman, the homestead of the farmer. England, with one heart and faith, replied to her. She recognized neither Churchman nor Dissenter, Tory, Whig, nor Radical—all were combined in the one great brotherhood of Christianity.

Extraordinary events generally elicit extraordinary talents and energies in the working classes. Some start from the masses—stand in bold relief—and enter earnestly upon a new sphere of action. Men and, in some instances, mere boys, in the present crisis have given proofs of powers for organizing and administering, few persons imagined them capable of. The letters of "A Lancashire Lad" will be remembered when the history of the famine is written, and all but the recollection of the sufferings it inflicted has passed away.

The few whose interest in the working classes extends beyond their material wants, were not slow to perceive a danger—concealed like a serpent amid wholesome herbs and fragrant flowers—from the vast outpourings of benevolence: the danger of idleness—danger to age, danger to youth, left to the weak guard of its quick passions; and schools were established—writing-schools for men and boys, sewing-schools for women and girls. It will be remembered with what intelligence the idea was seized and acted upon, especially by those whom it was intended to benefit. They appeared intuitively to comprehend its advantages.

The wives and daughters of the leading manufacturers gave not only their money, but their time. Levity and coarseness were restrained by their presence. Sisters of charity in the truest sense of the word, their works are registered on the eternal page where angel hands inscribe both thoughts and actions.

For the success of this wise and truly benevolent project, teachers were necessary; and they could only be found amongst the most educated and best conducted of the poor.

When application was made to Willie for the services of his daughter Ellen, the blind man hesitated. She was his home bird—one of the few joys of his solitary existence—his prison flower—a pearl he had garnered in his love. The high character of the ladies who made the application, the sacredness of the cause to which his child was called to devote herself, weighed with him far more than the increased means it would afford of existence, and he reluctantly consented. Ellen applied herself with simple earnestness to the task; and those who directed the school soon found her one of the most efficient of their assistants. Her influence over the girls appeared unbounded.

It would be difficult to describe the interest with which Miss Westbury and her niece, who were most active in the work of benevolence, regarded her. Constant in their attendance at the sewing-school, they were daily, hourly, enabled to appreciate the patient sweetness of her temper, the uprightness of her character. On their return home after the labors of the day, they were warm in her praise—almost enthusiastic.

Neither of the ladies observed how the eyes of Frederick sparkled as he listened to them.

During the last two years John Bentley had frequently promised his second son that he should be made a partner in the business; and as repeatedly broken his word. All his affections appeared centred in the eldest, Gilbert, whose character assimilated more closely with his own. Each had the same pride, the same heartlessness, the same dogged will. Although deeply hurt, Frederick repressed his feelings on his mother's account. He loved her too dearly to add to her sorrows. A yet stronger reason kept him silent: he was in love.

Our readers, we doubt not, have already guessed with whom. They have not forgotten the rose-bud and the open window. As a general rule, we place no great faith in the durability of love at first sight. In the present instance, however, it proved deep and lasting.

We cannot explain why, from the day of their first meeting, the thoughts of Ellen and her lover were occupied with each other. Not a word had passed between them; weeks passed before they spoke. The school to which Frederick acted as secretary brought them more frequently together, gave him opportunities the young man was not slow to avail himself of to urge his suit. The fair girl listened at first with incredulity. She could not believe that his intentions were serious and honorable; so many improbabilities and obstacles appeared to forbid their union—her own poverty, the pride and ambition of his father. One moment she believed and trusted him; the next, doubted and wept.

Such was the state of affairs when Frederick Bentley received a letter from his father, summoning him to London. In the midst of his pleasures, the keen man of business did not fail to perceive the vast opportunity for speculation the cotton famine presented; and he sent for his son to give him the necessary instructions.

"Perhaps," said Miss Westbury, when she heard of the letter, "your husband intends to open the mill again. Had your poor father lived, it would not have been closed."

Her niece shook her head. She had written, imploring him not to dismiss the hands when the crisis first came; entreated half work for them. In vain; John Bentley had not condescended even to answer her letter.

That same evening Frederick Bentley had a long interview with Ellen. He was to start the following day for London. We cannot repeat the arguments he used—his vows and promises. Persuasion is doubly persuasive from the lips of those we love.

The next morning, when her mother entered her little chamber to call her, Ellen had disappeared. A note, hastily written and blotted with tears, was on the table. Scarcely crediting the evidences of her senses, Mrs. Hannan snatched it up and read as follows:

> "Do not judge me hastily. All will be for the best. Forgive me—pray forgive me!"

The next instant the unhappy mother fell senseless upon the floor.

What words can paint the despair of Willie at the loss of the child he so tenderly loved? In the bitterness of his wrath he cursed, not his daughter, but her betrayer. Never had he felt his blindness so severely as at that moment.

"Helpless!" he murmured; "I am helpless. The meanest of God's creatures can defend its young. Who is the villain? Where is he? Lead me to him! Place him within my reach, that I may tear the cowardly betrayer of my child limb from limb!

"Oh! for the strength of Samson for one hour!" he added.

"Husband! husband! prayer and patience."

"Patience!" repeated the agitated father; "have I not been patient? Never has the hand of affliction pressed more heavily upon any human being than on myself, yet I bore up against it. I had energies, talents, hopes; in an instant all were blighted. Day was turned to night—the night that knows no dawn. I submitted. But it is hard, very hard, that man, heartless in his cruelty, should add to my helplessness and misery."

"Father," exclaimed Martin, whose cheeks were burning with blushes of shame, which his tears could not quench, "I know the villain who has deprived me of a sister."

"His name!" demanded Willie, eagerly; "his name!"

His mother made a sign to him to be silent; but either her son did not perceive it, or felt too much excited to obey her.

"Frederick Bentley!" he replied; "Frederick Bentley!"

The blind man clasped his hands, and sank back into a chair as suddenly as if a thunderbolt had struck him.

"You have killed him!" sobbed Mrs. Hannan.

The terrified boy fell upon his knees, and threw his arms around the senseless form of his parent.

On hearing of the flight of Ellen, the widow had thrown her apron over her face to indulge her sorrow in silence; but the words of her daughter-in-law quickly recalled her to herself. The lesser grief vanished before the greater.

"Speak to your poor old mother, darlin'. Don't leave me in my age alone. Curse them!" she added, falling suddenly upon her knees in the centre of the floor. "Father and son, I curse them both. They ha' been a blight and a ruin to me and mine. Oh! that Sam wor here," she continued; "he'd right us."

"Hush! hush!" said the pale and anxious wife, who, in the midst of her own misery, found strength, in the devotion of her woman's nature, to console and support her husband. "He moves! he hears you."

"Curse them!" repeated the widow, without heeding her.

"Who spoke of cursing?" demanded Willie, faintly.

"I did—I did."

"Not my child! my sweet, my—my once innocent Ellen. Child, did I say? I have no child now!" he added, yielding to a passionate burst of grief.

"Father!" murmured the boy.

"True—true; I forgot. Forgive your poor blind parent. Sorrow has made me unjust. I have one left me still. Lead me to my room," he continued, turning to his wife; "I require to be alone, to commune with my heart; to pray for strength to bear up against this heavy blow. To pray—to pray."

Later in the day, when Willie re-appeared amongst them, his countenance, though pale, was composed. There was that resignation in his features which a reliance upon the Consoler of all sorrows alone can give.

"Mother," he said.

The widow was by his side in an instant.

"Wife."

Mrs. Hannan silently took his hand.

"Where is Martin?"

"Here, father; here," replied the lad.

"This is a bitter sorrow that has fallen upon our humble but happy home. True, we feel poverty; but it was poverty without shame. We must pray for resignation. Let us ask for it submissively, and we shall find it. Let the name of the child who has disgraced us be heard no more. Except in prayer," he added; "except in prayer."

His words were received in silence, broken only by the sobs of the widow and her daughter-in-law.

"I will do more than pray," said Martin, after a pause. "I am almost a man; this last wrong, I feel, has given me the strength of one; and—and——"

He faltered; the depth of his emotion began to choke his words.

"Proceed," said his father, calmly.

"I will avenge it!" exclaimed the boy.

"And right, too," cried the widow, bitterly. "I glory in thee, lad!"

"Martin!" replied the blind man, gravely.

"Yes, father."

"You have never disobeyed me yet; nor given me one hour's uneasiness."

"Never, willingly, father."

"As you would not have to reproach yourself when I am in my grave—and He alone knows how soon my sorrows may lay me there—as you value my blessing, promise me—promise me faithfully—to take no steps to revenge this wrong. It is a great one, and hard to bear. If you meet the destroyer," he continued, for he would not pronounce his name, "pass him as you would a stranger, without one angry glance, one word of defiance. You understand me?"

The youth bit his lips and remained silent. He was naturally a spirited, proud boy, and felt his sister's shame most keenly.

"And mind, not a word against Ellen. Look upon her as dead—think of her as she was—forget what she is. You do not answer me."

"She has broken your heart, father," said Martin, sullenly.

"I have forgiven her that."

"Brought disgrace upon——"

"Do you think I do not feel it?" interrupted Willie; "feel it keenly? Give me your hand, my boy. Come to your poor blind parent. We have a better avenger than our own weak passions—One whose justice cannot err. Leave all to Him.

"Promise me."

"I do promise you," replied the youth, "and may God help me not to break it!"

"Amen," said his mother, kissing him. "Amen."

From that day, as it was tacitly understood by the inmates of the cottage, the name of Ellen was pronounced no more, except in prayer, which her parents never failed to offer up for her. Letters containing money frequently arrived; but, although want was beneath his roof, hunger, at times, knocking at his very door, Willie and his wife scorned to accept assistance from what they considered their daughter's shame. The letters were burnt unread, and the contents, under the title of "Sin Offerings," forwarded to the committee for the distressed operatives.

When Frederick Bentley, after a month's absence, returned to Manchester, instead of being welcomed with smiles by his mother and Miss Westbury, he was received with tears—far more eloquent than reproaches. His conduct had disappointed them—shaken their confidence in the stay Providence seemed to have raised in their desolation.

"Don't weep, mother," exclaimed the young man—"pray don't weep. It unmans me."

"I weep for what you once were," replied Mrs. Bentley. "Providence has been pleased to afflict me with many sorrows, but this—this surely is the worst."

"Aunt, what can I say——"

"Don't speak to me," interrupted the old maid. "*I am trying to hate you.*"

"You will not succeed," observed the culprit.

"Such a sweet girl! so good! so pure and innocent! You must have had the heart of a fiend to betray her."

"I loved—adored her."

"Love!" repeated his mother. "Oh, Frederick, do not profane the word; a true heart finds no happiness in the degradation of the being it adores."

"I could have forgiven you," added Miss Westbury, "if you had married her."

"Indeed!"

"But to deceive her—disgrace her! the daughter of the man, too, whom your father had so cruelly wronged—whose misfortunes should have rendered his child sacred. Shame! shame! It was cowardly as well as heartless. There, I have told you what I think, and now my mind is at rest."

Frederick Bentley remained till a late hour with his mother and Miss Westbury, whose affection for the culprit we must suppose to have been far greater than their resentment; for when he bade them good-night, they kissed him several times, and smiled upon him through their tears.

It was soon whispered—for servants will talk—that Mrs. Bentley and her aunt walked on more than one occasion to the cottage he had taken for Ellen, a mile or two from Manchester. If true, our readers will agree that it could only have been in the charitable view of reclaiming her.

There was one person who did not bear the loss of Ellen with the same patience that her father did—the overseer. Although hopeless of obtaining her himself, he could not endure that another should carry off the prize, and he wrote a long letter to his employer, painting the conduct of Frederick in the darkest colors.

John Bentley smiled as he read it. His son, he considered, had avenged the shame Willie had affixed to his own name.

"I didn't think the boy had so much spirit," he observed, when relating the affair to his favorite, Gilbert.

"I always thought him sly," replied the elder brother. "Is the girl pretty, I wonder?"

"I have never seen her."

"How about this partnership?" added the guardsman. "Surely, with his simple tastes and habits, Frederick might rest satisfied with the allowance you have hitherto made him."

"Would you have been satisfied with it?" demanded his father, not quite pleased with the tone of the speaker.

"My dear sir, that is a very different thing!"

"You are both my sons."

"True, but I am the eldest."

"Granted."

"And have the name, the position of the family to keep up. Then the rank of Lady Augusta."

"Very true," replied John Bentley, musingly. "And yet I sometimes ask myself whether the advantages of marrying into a titled family have not been overrated. I am certain," he added, "they have been dearly paid for."

Gilbert regarded his father earnestly.

"Your wife is anything but grateful," continued the speaker. "She has forgotten the beggary from which I redeemed her. Prosperity has made her near-sighted. She scarcely ever recognizes me in the park or at the opera."

"The giddiness of youth," exclaimed the husband, forcing a laugh. "You have no idea how thoughtless a creature she is."

"Possibly not," replied his parent, drily. "To speak plainly, Gilbert, I dislike such giddiness. I perceive, by-the-by, from the morning papers," continued the latter, "that you give another ball on Thursday week."

"Yes; I believe so."

There was a pause, during which father and son regarded each other inquiringly.

"You spoke of the morning papers," continued the latter; "have you not received an invitation?"

"No."

"What thoughtlessness!"

"In my young days," observed John Bentley, "we designated such conduct by another name—ingratitude."

"My dear sir!"

"Frederick is never thoughtless," continued his father. "I shall leave for Manchester in a few days. It is time I kept my promise to him, and made him a partner."

The next morning a most affectionate note arrived from his daughter-in-law, inviting John Bentley to her ball. He went, and experienced, like most men who place themselves in a wrong position, the consequence of his want of judgment. The high-born relatives and connections of Lady Augusta acknowledged him with supercilious coldness, or else ignored his presence. The fashionable friends of his son were barely civil to him. They, too, had heard the whisper that burns like a hot brand, searing the dishonored brow.

In the course of the evening Gilbert came to him, evidently laboring under great excitement.

"What has moved you?" demanded his father, anxiously.

"The worst news I have heard since my horse was scratched for the Leger."

"And what may that be?"

"The regiment I was about to exchange into is ordered to Manchester."

John Bentley bit his lips, but forbore to ask his son why he objected to being quartered in Manchester. The answer must have proved painful to both. In Manchester, the career of the wealthy mill-owner was known, and certain to be severely commented upon.

"I must try and back out," added the speaker. "It may be as well."

"Or get leave of absence."

"That will be difficult, if not hopeless."

"Not with his lordship's influence," added Gilbert. "Lady Augusta declares she will not accompany me, and her family will support her in her resolution."

His father smiled bitterly. He recollected how differently the haughty wife had conducted herself before marriage. Probably, also, he regretted his own want of caution in the ample settlements he had been weak enough to make."

"Gilbert," he said; "I have one piece of advice to give you. In the event of your ever becoming a widower——"

"A widower!" interrupted his son.

"Yes. Men do become widowers, do they not?"

"Oh, certainly."

"Should you feel disposed to marry again, never make any settlement. It renders a woman independent of her husband, obstinate, and sometimes worse. I made no settlement," he continued, "when I married your mother, and you see how free I am; how quiet and yielding my wife is."

"Very excellent advice, no doubt, sir, in its way," observed the young man; "but I don't see how it is to touch my present difficulties."

"Nor I. I give it only in case of contingencies."

"And Lady Augusta?"

"Settle the affair between you as you will," replied John Bentley. "No lesson will teach a man how to rule a wife: he must know it instinctively."

With which reflection the speakers separated.

CHAPTER XI.

A frantic gipsy now the house he haunts,
And in wild phrases speaks dissembled wants.
PRIOR.

THERE were many anxious hearts awaiting the arrival of John Bentley in Manchester—Miss Westbury and her niece in fear and trembling, not for themselves, but one who was justly dear to them; Frederick and Ellen with impatience such as no words may paint. Till the former became a partner, their position was a precarious one, the son being entirely dependent upon his father.

Week after week was appointed for the important visit, and again postponed. Independent of a natural reluctance to face the woman he had so heartlessly deceived, the arch hypocrite did not care to face the cold regard, or half-veiled contempt, of former friends.

Success in an evil course is sure to entail its moral punishment.

Miss Westbury and her niece were returning from one of their daily visits of charity, when in a bye-street inhabited chiefly by operatives, they encountered Michael Haman. Time had wrought but slight alteration in the appearance of the old man, who lived for a purpose, and it sustained him.

Faithful to the promise made to her worthless husband, Mrs. Bentley slightly bowed, and passed on. Her aunt was about to follow her example, when Michael placed his hand upon her arm.

"I must speak with you," he whispered.

"With me!"

"Are not my words intelligible?"

"To the sense, certainly," replied the old maid; "but not the less puzzling. What can you possibly have to say to me?"

"Have my predictions proved true?"

He glanced at his niece, who continued to walk slowly on before them.

"Too true."

"You admit John Bently to be a villian, then?"

"He certainly is not what we thought him," answered the lady.

"Should not every honest heart and hand unite to punish him?"

"It is not the task for a wife to undertake."

"A wife," repeated the old man musingly. "Humph! perhaps not, perhaps not. But you are not his wife."

"Thank Heaven!" ejaculated the spinster, heartily.

Michael could scarcely repress a smile.

"I am certain that you love my niece," he observed.

"As my own child."

"And will aid me then?"

"Why, look you, Mr. Haman," said Miss Westbury; "that I have no great love for John Bentley is true. He has proved himself the heartless speculator, the unmanly husband you predicted he would turn out; but I will join in no dark plots, no underhand means to ruin him. More—hear me out—if you propose any such line of conduct to me, I shall feel it my duty to put him on his guard. You are fairly warned; and now if you have anything to say to me, you may speak out."

"I am fairly warned," replied Michael. "No deceit in me."

"And will speak out."

"Do so quickly, then," exclaimed the spinster, beginning to feel a little nervous. "I detest mysteries; they look so like guilt. What is your object?"

"To discover my late brother's will."

"He never made one."

"He did."

Miss Westbury began to tremble so violently, that she could scarcely sustain herself.

"John Bentley and Willie Hannan both witnessed it. The former no doubt, believes it to have been destroyed; but I feel assured that it is not. My brother was not the man to make away with one will till he had executed a second."

"Where can it be then? In whose hands did he confide it?"

"That is what I am most anxious to discover," replied the old man; "for destroyed it is not. Had I access to the counting-house at the mill, or the little study at the residence, I would speedily satisfy myself upon that point."

"The counting-house?" repeated his hearer, mechanically.

"Yes."

"I have the keys."

"And will give them to me?" demanded Michael Haman eagerly.

"No," answered Miss Westbury, resolutely; "but I will search there myself. You have given me a hint, and I will profit by it."

"Shall I learn the result."

"If successful, you will be sure to hear of it," was the reply.

"Not a word to my niece."

"You may rely upon my discretion," observed the affectionate woman; "it would be cruel to raise false hopes. And now you had better leave me. I shall be puzzled enough as it is to answer all the questions Mary will put to me respecting our interview."

"Poor girl! she looks unhappy," said the old man.

"She is unhappy."

"I understand husband and sons are alike—all worthless."

"Not at all," exclaimed Miss Westbury, warmly. "Frederick is as good and affectionate a son as his brother is heartless and indifferent."

"Good and affectionate!" repeated Michael, slowly; "umph! And how about his conduct to the daughter of blind Willie?"

"I know nothing respecting such affairs," interrupted the spinster, colouring to the very temples; "I am surprised you should allude to such a subject."

And so saying she turned from him to follow Mrs. Bentley.

"A good woman," muttered the gentleman; "warm-hearted, but a weak judgment. Affection blinds her to the vices of her favorite; it blinds us all," he added, "all. She will never rest till she has plucked forth the heart of this mystery. Something tells me the will of Gilbert must be found."

He certainly could not have selected a better or more indefatigable agent to make the discovery.

As Miss Westbury suggested, Mrs. Bentley felt exceedingly anxious to learn what had passed between her aunt and uncle. It was not curiosity merely that prompted her questions, but that nervous anxiety which long acquaintance with misfortune engenders.

"Mary, my love, have you confidence in me?" asked the old maid.

"As in myself."

"Then, do not ask me anything I am resolved not to tell you at present. One thing you may believe; there is nothing to alarm you in what has occurred. So not a word, if you love and trust me."

With this reply her niece was forced to be satisfied.

Human nature, under any circumstances, will be found pretty generally the same. All are not bad; all are not good; it appears to be pretty evenly balanced. Whilst many exerted themselves, and submitted even to privation, to assist the hands thrown, by no fault of their own, out of employ, others saw in their distress the means of making money, gaining from the necessities of the poor.

Amongst the latter class, *the German Jew, as he styled himself, Norle,* was the most active. With a large capital at his command, he could afford to give a higher price by way of purchase than the pawnbrokers could *lend*. The difference, perhaps, after all was not very great, but quite sufficient to give him the preference, especially if we consider that when children are crying for bread, even a penny becomes an object.

More than one receptacle for the purchase of merchandise of every kind was opened by him in various parts of the city. Poverty flocked to them, and hard grasping avarice made its bargains. The fellow himself presided at the establishment where he first commenced business.

The house of the Jew had been greatly enlarged, and a new front put in. Over the door, in flaming letters of gold and blue, appeared the name of the owner—"Brandt Norle, Merchant and General Dealer." He was a general dealer in every sense of the word; in fact, it would have been difficult to find a more miscellaneous collection in one spot. Beds and mattresses piled from the floor to the ceiling. Furniture of every description; bales of clothes, ready packed, intended for Australia; crates filled with boots and shoes; watches, spoons, fire-irons, stoves, crockery—in short, the contents of a hundred humble and once happy homes, now sad; stripped of everything that industry had gathered patiently and laboriously.

It was known that Brandt Norle would purchase any kind of property, provided he could get it at his own price. No wonder the place was thronged by pale, despairing faces, chiefly women, some with children in their arms, others clinging to the skirts of their gowns, and watching with keen, hungry faces the hard bargain the owner of the shop was driving with their mothers. It was the harvest of Mammon. The fellow knew they must accept his offer—famine cannot afford to wait.

"Take it or leave it," was his reply to a tall, respectable-looking mechanic, who had brought a silver watch for sale. "Thirty shillings is a long price."

"I paid you four pounds ten for it," observed the vendor, "only six months ago."

"Can't help it."

"Richards, the pawnbroker, has lent five-and-twenty upon it."

"Take it to him," said Norle, with a chuckle, "and lose five shillings. You will never be able to redeem it."

The man appeared to hesitate, but the sight of his wife and children, who were waiting for him at the opposite side of the street, decided him.

"I suppose you must have it," he exclaimed, with a sigh; "we can't starve."

"You can if you like," replied the Jew, with a brutal laugh. "I don't force my money upon any one."

The weaver bit his lips, and received the money in silence.

"Take them to the rag merchant's," said Norle to a poor woman, who had opened a bundle of clothes upon the counter; "all they are fit for."

"I bought them here," observed the poor creature, humbly.

"Very likely."

"And have only worn the shawl once. It is as good as new."

"Well," said the dealer, glancing with affected indifference at the articles, to satisfy himself that his valuation was correct, "you may have five shillings for the lot, if you like."

"Five shillings!" repeated the woman, despairingly.

"I know that I am a fool," added Norle, "and shall ruin myself in the long run by my liberality; but I can't find it in my heart to be hard such times as these."

His assistants, two hard-featured, repulsive, middle-aged men, exchanged glances, and grinned, as if there was something exceedingly comic in the idea of their employer looking into his heart for anything; possibly, they doubted whether he had one.

"Say six shillings," urged the poor creature, imploringly.

"Now, that's what I call imposing on good nature," exclaimed the owner of the shop, tossing the things towards her with an air of contempt. "Take it or leave it, that's my system; not a farthing more."

The infant in the arms of the woman began to cry.

"And make haste about it," added the speaker. "I can't be stunned with that noise."

The mother held forth her hand for the money, and having received it, tottered, rather than walked, into the street. As she disappeared, the old mendicant who had regarded the prosperous Mr. Norle so earnestly a few hours previously, in front of the Dispensary, walked into the shop, and making his way to the extreme end, seated himself upon a bale of goods. He was rather a remarkable-looking man. Age had bowed his naturally tall figure, or there might have been something of affectation in the manner in which he carried himself. His hair and beard were white as snow; the former, long and curly, escaped in profusion from under a slouched hat.

There was something picturesque in the appearance of the man. His swarthy countenance, although deeply wrinkled, had all the signs of health. Small, dark, viper-like eyes gave animation to his features. As he sat, leaning upon an oaken stick, or rather staff, he would not have made a bad study for a painter. A great coat, threadbare and patched, which descended to his feet, completed the description of his person.

"Now, my man, what can I do for you?" inquired Mr. Norle, walking to the end of the counter, near which the new customer was seated.

"I am in no hurry. I can wait."

The dealer regarded him attentively for a few seconds, and then attended to some one else. After doing one or two more of his Shylock bargains, he returned to his singular visitor, and repeated his question, and met with the same reply—

"I can wait."

"But I can't," said the owner of the shop. "Time is money, and I have neither the one nor the other to throw away."

"You are lucky," observed the beggar, sarcastically.

"Lucky!"

"Yes. I knew you when you had plenty of time, and could make little or nothing of it."

Norle regarded him with increased attention, and shook his head, evidently puzzled by his strange visitor. He could not make him out.

"I am not good at riddles," he observed at last, "nor in a humor to be sported with. What do you want?"

The old man uttered a few words in a strange tongue. A deep flush suffused the swarthy countenance of the dealer, and his eyes appeared troubled; but he quickly recovered himself, and forcing a laugh, exclaimed:

"What gibberish is this?"

"The Romany, Lin—the Romany, Lin."

"Romany, Lin!" repeated the master of the shop; "never heard of such a language."

"Perhaps you understand figures better," observed the mendicant, without appearing in the least disconcerted.

"Well, they certainly are more in my way."

"I thought so. What do you think of £387?"

The prosperous Mr. Norle turned exceedingly pale.

"*Can you add them together, and tell me how many they make?*"

"Make!" *repeated the dealer, half dead with terror.*

"Because if you can't, I can find those in Manchester who can, that's all. You understand me?"

"Scarcely," faltered the conscience-stricken wretch.

"Think a little," said the visitor, with his disagreeable smile.

"Who are you? What devil sent you here to torment me?"

"A *green* devil."

"Green devil?"

"Aye, of Liverpool. Do you understand me now?"

At first the people in the shop had paid but little attention to the conversation. As it proceeded, they began to feel interested in it, and gathered nearer to the speakers.

"What o'clock is it?" added the mendicant, at the same time drawing an old-fashioned silver watch from his pocket, and regarding the dial.

"Half drunk, as usual," exclaimed Norle, pretending to burst into a hearty laugh. "I recollect you now, and the watch you bought of me several years ago. We had a glass together over the bargain, if I remember rightly. Glad to see you—heartily glad to see you," he added, extending his hand to him.

"I thought you would be," said the old man.

"Only an old customer," observed one of the customers.

"Mr. Norle, Mr. Norle," cried several voices.

"My shopman will attend to you," replied the dealer, hastily. Leaning on the counter, he uttered a few words in the very language which a few minutes previously he pretended not to understand.

"You recollect the Romany, Lin, now," said his visitor.

"Be cautious," whispered the guilty wretch. "Return in the evening, when the place is closed, and——"

"Be quietly disposed of; eh, Lin?" interrupted the mendicant. "No, boy, no—I am not that greenhorn. You knew me from the first moment I entered the shop."

"No."

"Don't lie."

"Not till you spoke."

"Well," said the old man, meekly "that is possible, for it is years since we met; and I am changed. So are you. I was a good uncle to you, Lin; and I hope you will prove as good a nephew to me."

"Anything in reason."

"Wasn't I always reasonable?"

"Sometimes."

After considerable squabbling, during which menaces and curses were alternately exchanged, Norle handed the old man over the sum of twenty pounds.

"That ought to satisfy you," he observed.

"So it will—*for a time.*"

The dealer winced at the reply.

"When it is gone you shall see me again," added the speaker. "We aint met after all these years to part so soon."

"Curse him!" muttered Norle, as he quitted the shop.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

* * *

SOUL.—We may compare the soul to a linen cloth; it must be first washed to take off its native hue and color, and to make it white; and afterwards it must be ever and anon washed to preserve it white.

* * *

—He that gives good advice, builds with one hand; he that gives good counsel and example builds with the other; but he that gives good admonition and bad example, builds with one hand and pulls down with the other.

THE AVELOCK.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

O Mountain of the Avelock!
I see thee soaring still on high,
Each rifted pine and mighty rock
Still mantled by the azure sky
With love, while all the great winds sing
Triumphal marches round thy dome,
Where eagles fold the weary wing
Of right upon their royal home;
And still thy torrents shout their hymn
August as in the days of old
When Euryclydon, vast and dim,
Was first with thine in chorus rolled:
Yet, Mountain of the Avelock!
I cannot bear to gaze on thee,
Though every pine and pass and rock
Were known unto my infancy.
O why this horror of thy form?
And why this shrinking from thy voice
Of glorious torrents mid the storm
Still calling on me to rejoice?

II.

O Mountain of the Avelock!
Hateful is every crag and flood:
They've trembled to the battle-shock;
They smoke with fratricidal blood:
Beside them whiten brothers' bones;
Above them shriek foul birds of prey;
The gladdest breeze has only moans
Of sorrow through the gladdest day;
The flowers are but funereal now;
The rainbows round but mockeries are,
And, wondering, upon thy brow
I still behold Eve's peaceful star:
How can such holy creatures dwell
Where gory Madness smote his hand,
And all the fiery Hate of Hell
Burned up to desolate the Land?
Veil, Mountain of the Avelock,
Veil evermore in clouds thy face!
In shame and sorrow let each rock
Brood over thy accursed place!

◆

FOREST ADVENTURES.—No. 12.

BY COL. WALTER B. DUNLAP.

DOSING A GRIZZLY BEAR.

On the second day from Fofoochi we made over twenty miles, and I considered that there could be no more danger from the blood-seeking Barolongs. This day had passed without the firing of a rifle—a thing which had not happened before for over a month—and when we came to prepare our supper we had no fresh meat. I did not feel in a very pleasant mood. It did not seem right that we should have gone twenty-four hours without shooting something.

"It's no wonder to me," said Ben Gilroy. "We've got a Jonah amongst us. If you'd just turned old Fitz. over to the chief of the Fofoochi's we wouldn't have had any of this trouble."

"O, my golly!" cried Fitzeben, rolling up the whites of his eyes, "if dey'd gone an' got ole Ben Gilroy, dey'd 'a got jes' what dey'd ort 'o had. I tell ye, Mas'r Colonel, Ben Gilroy's a runaway nigger; an' when dey cum pooty nigh a cotchin' ob him he turned pale. Dat's what makes him look so nigh white. O, Lord bress us! he's only a bleeched nigger—dat's all."

This turned the laugh upon Ben, who quietly lighted his pipe, and then began to hector the darkey on his own account.

"I wish," said Harry Rusk, "that the Jew who sold me this pipe had to swallow it whole."

"Don't worry about that old pipe," cried Abner.

"How can I help it," returned Harry, holding the dingy looking thing up to the light. "Fifteen silver dollars I paid for that precious piece of greasy clay. I only hope I may live to see the man that sold it to me once more."

"How'll ye swap long wid dis chile?" asked Fitzeben, holding up the pipe he was just going to light.

"What ye got, Fitz.?"

"By golly, I reckon I'se got a reg'lar meersham. I bo't dat ar' ob ole Bob Noyes, dat use' to bind books in Pennisservassie. He said an ole sea capt'n gub it to him. Ha, yah,—it is de rale giniwine meersham—dat am, for sartin."

But Harry had no desire to trade, and the darkey proceeded to light his pipe; after which he got as far from Ben as possible, that he might enjoy his smoke in peace.

It is not for me to defend the "filthy weed" from the thousand and one aspersions that are cast upon it by its enemies; but I cannot join them in their crusade, for I have derived too much comfort from the article. At the close of the long, tedious day, when worn with fatigue and care, I hail my pipe as the one friend who will not fail me. There is inspiration in the incense that curls up from the creamy bowl, and all the harsh thoughts of the hour are softened and subdued. A thousand pleasing fancies are born of the circling cloud, and cheerful spirits seem to peep forth from the aromatic mist, whispering notes of calmness and repose. O, ye reformer of other men's lives, strike as mercilessly as you please at all the sins of habit, but leave me this one solace. Take my coat; take my blanket; but, if you would be merciful, lay not your profane hands upon my meerschaum. I will forego all fats, and spices, and rich food; I will, if it please you, plunge my body into cold water, with the thermometer at zero, and then flay my skin with the coarsest of Russia crash,—I will do all this if, as an antidote, you will leave me in peace with my pipe!

We were smoking in silence, old Fitzeben having got beyond Ben's reach, when Harry proposed that Abner should sing a song.

"No, no," said Abner; "I cannot sing and smoke at the same time. But, my dear Harry, I can think of something better. You were saying something this forenoon about a bear that you once met. Give us the story."

"Aye—the story!" cried Ben.

I also joined in the request, and pretty soon Harry consented to please us.

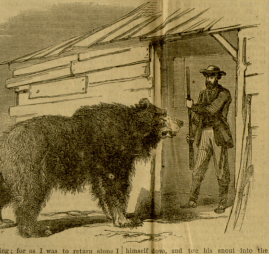
"Some years ago," he commenced, "I was close under the shadows of the Rocky Mountains, in the employ of a government agent, engaged in surveying land, and also in laying out a military road. In addition to our crew of laborers there were two companies of United States infantry, under charge of Major Slocum, who remained with us. We had been engaged nearly two weeks in bending the road around a high bluff, and I had drawn my plans far in advance of the workmen—so far that for some days I should have nothing to do at engineering. The nearest settlement was about thirty miles off, and as I imagined there might be letters and papers there for me, I determined to go and get them. Major Slocum wished to send a few errands by me, as also did our surgeon. I would have gone alone, so far as danger was concerned; but the major would not have it so. He selected an orderly sergeant, named Sullivan, to accompany me, and I did not object. In the morning, before our horses had been saddled, the surgeon brought to me a list of the articles he wished me to procure for him. At Burnham's Bend, the settlement alluded to, there was a military depot, and he told me I should find all the articles there. Among the items was one of eight ounces of concentrated sulphuric acid.

"'You will be very careful of that acid,' he said to me, as we ran over the list together. 'It is terrible stuff if you let it get loose. Have them put it in a strong phial, and do you be careful and not allow it to get broken.'

"I knew the nature of this fiery acid well enough to take proper care of it; and I told him to be under no apprehensions. As for the quinine, morphine, ipecac, and so on, I would look out that they came intact.

"After breakfast we set off, promising ourselves a pleasant journey. The day was a beautiful one; Sullivan was an excellent companion; and the road was wild and charming. We carried our rifles slung upon our backs, and good pistols in our holsters; and during the day we shot game enough to have feasted a large party.

"Towards night Sullivan complained of a pain in the back and head. He said his head ached, and that he felt sick and dizzy. He confessed that he had not felt smart in the morning, but he had supposed that exercise in the saddle would revive him. We reached the settlement at Burnham's Bend just at dusk, and as soon as possible I got my companion into bed, and brought the post surgeon to see him. I found plenty of letters and papers for our party, and passed the evening in overhauling the missives which belonged to me. On the following morning I found poor Sullivan down with typhoid fever. There was no mistaking the symptoms; so I was forced to turn him over to the sick list of the station. During the day I did my errands; and when evening came again I packed up ready for an early start on the coming morning; for as I was to return alone I should have considerable load, and should not be able to hurry. I went to bed early, and got up early; and, by invitation, went down to take breakfast with the surgeon. When he put up the medicines for me he had left the sulphuric acid out from the package, remarking that I had better carry it where it could not get broken. The flask containing it was a strong one, and so securely sealed that it could not leak; and I concluded that I would carry it in my pocket. I had carried a glass flask in that same breast pocket a great many times without accident; so when he gave me the acid, which he did the last thing, I placed it in my pocket, promising myself that it would go very safely indeed.



"I called to see Sullivan before I left, and assured myself that he would be taken good care of, and also that he would return as soon as he was able. It was eight o'clock when I set out, and the first dozen miles were over a smooth, pretty road, and under a clear, pleasant sky; but towards noon great clouds rolled up above the trees, and the wind began to blow. I understood something of the weather signs of that region, and I knew that I was caught in a squall; and I also knew that it would be for my interest and comfort to find shelter as soon as possible. As fortune would have it, I was not far from where our party had made a stop some three months before, and a shanty which had been put up for our forge was still standing. I put spurs to my horse, and reached the place just as great drops of rain were beginning to fall. The shanty was standing, just as we had left it, and close by it were two horse-sheds. I led my horse to one of these shelters, and hitched him, and then made my way to the shanty, taking my heavy portmanteau with me. I had not a moment to spare, for just as I entered the hut the wind came with a howl, and the rain poured down in a flood. I ensconced myself in one corner, where the driving wet could not reach me, and felt prepared to enjoy the wild scene, provided it did not last too long.

"I had been thus seated half an hour, or more, watching the effects of the storm, when my attention was called to my horse. He was snorting, as though in great terror, and evidently trying to break his halter. The shed was directly back of the shanty, and a little open window looked out that way. I arose and went to this window, and saw the horse rearing and plunging with his ears and tail erect, and his nostrils widely distended. I spoke to him, and he turned towards me with a wistful look. I have seen the look of prayerful entreaty as plainly speaking in the face of a horse as I ever seen it in man; and at that moment my horse seemed to beg of me to care for him. I was looking round the shed, to see if anything was there, when I heard a noise behind me that caused me to turn. I did not wonder that my horse had been startled; and I don't think you will wonder that I was startled.

"In the doorway, not fifteen feet from me, stood a full grown grizzly bear! As I turned he gave a low snorting grunt, and raised himself to a sitting posture. My rifle stood close by my side, and I seized it as quick as possible, and brought it to my shoulder. The bear seemed to understand what I meant, and also to realize that he was presenting to me a most favorable mark, for he dropped his forefeet to the ground, and growled at me.

"If I had stopped to consider I might have done differently. If I had not fired at him I am not sure that he would have attacked me. At all events, I might have waited, and gained a fairer point for my bullet. But I did not wait. The moment the brute growled, I aimed at a point directly between his eyes, and fired. The bear started back a single pace; shook his head once or twice; and then wiped his face with his huge paw. My ball had glanced upon his skull, and he was not materially harmed; and in a very few seconds he recovered from the shock. Then he looked at me again, and I saw fire in his eye as he spread those terrible claws. He started towards me, and lifted himself again upon his haunches. I sprang upon one side, and escaped the blow he had aimed at me. He shook the blood from his shaggy brow, and made at me again, this time growling fiercely, and gnashing his teeth. I could not reach the door and was driven into a corner.

"At that moment I think I was in the snuggest corner I ever occupied. To escape by dodging past the bear was impossible. He was close upon me, and again upon his haunches, with his fatal claws ready to strike me down if I moved. I knew the power there was in his blow. An ox would have been no more than a child beneath the weight of that paw. My pistols were in my holsters—and my holsters were with the saddle, upon the back of my horse. I had my knife with me—a good-sized Bowie—but what could I do with that.

"There was but an instant between me and death. During that instant a happy thought flashed upon me. I thought of the sulphuric acid. If I should poke the flask at the beast's nose, he would gnash at it. With a quick movement I drew the flask from my pocket, and tore off the wrapper. The bear followed my motions with his eyes, as though he wondered what I was doing. I held the flask by the neck and extended it towards him. His first movement was to strike at it with his paw; but I was quick enough to snatch it away from the blow; and instantly I poked it up at his nose again. This time he did exactly as I wished him to do. He opened his hog-like mouth, and crushed the frail glass between his teeth, and my hand was out of the way.

"My soul! what a moment that was for the bear. If all the fires of Tartarus confined within the pent-up limits of that flask had suddenly burst forth in his throat, he could not have been more thoroughly pained and crazed. He threw himself down, and tore his snout into the ground, foaming and crying with keenest torture. I did not wait for the paroxysm to pass, but drew my knife, and sprang upon him. The first blow did not kill him—nor the second; but finally I managed to drive the keen blade home to his heart, and his misery was at an end.

"I did not take off the skin, for I had no way to carry it. It would have weighed too much to add to the burden my horse had already to bear; so I contented myself with cutting off his claws which were no mean trophy, the longest of them measuring full six inches.

"I eat my dinner in the shanty, close by the carcass of the bear; and by the time I had finished the storm had passed. I reached our post about an hour after dark; and when I had delivered the letters and papers to those who were eagerly waiting for them, and had reported the sickness of Sullivan to the Major, I went to carry the hospital budget to the surgeon. I gave him all but the sulphuric acid, and in lieu of that I told him the story of my adventure, and presented him with half a dozen of the longest of the grizzly's claws. He was perfectly satisfied."

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WOMEN LECTURERS.

I never heard a *woman* speak in public till a few evenings since. As I sat waiting with an immense audience for her appearance I tried to fancy myself on that platform addressing such a multitude. The very idea made me shiver with nervous terror. Were life or death depending, I might do it; but surely not else. I could not conceive how any woman could get up there, and in a calm, self-collected manner do justice to her own thoughts and their expectations. Still I was more glad than I can express that there *are* women who, having something to say, have the nerve to say it, fitly, properly and courageously, from their own stand-point, as a man may, under similar circumstances.

There were various characteristic remarks made by the expectant by-standers before the lady-speaker came in. One "didn't believe in women's gabble; he thought their place was at home, darning stockings." Still this conservative gentleman sat with exemplary patience nearly an hour, waiting to hear that "gabble." Another "wouldn't like to marry a woman who would step out from her own fireside to be hissed or applauded, in public, according to the humor of a promiscuous audience." Another wished it distinctly understood "that he had come merely to please his wife; as far as he individually was concerned, he considered it a great waste of time." Another sneeringly inquired "if a lady orator could tell us anything *new*;" forgetting that *male* orators are not always celebrated either for originality or profundity, as the hall we were then assembled in might bear witness. In short, not an approving, or encouraging, or liberal, or generous remark met my ear. Not a word to intimate, that if the lady speaker had a gift for something else than "darning stockings" all her life, she had a right, and did well to exercise it, in a modest and proper manner. And yet, I dare say, these liberal-minded male-critics would claim the right to be lawyers if they saw fit, although Mrs. Grundy might prefer they should be shoemakers. Now I was pained and disgusted at this narrowness in this year of our Lord 1863. I do not wish to be misunderstood here. Nobody can hold in higher estimation than myself those good, lovely and intelligent women who are the saints of the household. All honor to their god-like patience and faithfulness; meeting so seldom on earth its just and appreciative reward. Still it remains that there are women, like men, who can *marry a cause*. Who can be happier and more useful in laboring for, and promoting it, than they could be as parents and heads of families. Nor, spite of intolerance and conservatism, need they of necessity be lacking in those womanly traits which, men tell us, most endear our sex to them.

For one, I am rejoiced when any new and honest avenue of interest or employment is pointed out for women. There are worse customs than that of feminine orators, sanctioned by Mrs. Grundy as legitimate.

"For honored well
Are the charms that sell
When priests the selling do."

Nor does Mrs. Grundy make a "pother" when a woman's soul vegetates, that she may work worsted dogs and cats, or when she trots round in any other traditional and respectable peck measure, instituted for the moral enlightenment of our sex.

Heartily my soul welcomed the intelligent woman who stepped out on the platform that evening in so dignified and modest a manner. It is only because I am such an arrant coward, that I have not myself before now, sent an affirmative answer to the many tempting offers I have received for years for this purpose from all parts of the country. As it is, I can only grasp warmly by the hand those women who have the nerve to witness the effect of their own words; while I watch mine at a safe distance on paper, with Mr. Bonner to back me in the New York Ledger.

Fanny Fern.

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THE MODEL MISTRESS FROM THE KITCHEN AND NURSERY STAND-POINT.

She never is "mean enough" to institute any inquiries into the previous character and belongings of the "young lady" who comes to live with her. She never intimates to her cook that a handful or two of coal will boil a tea-kettle quite as well as a ton. She never demeans herself by peeping into cupboards and closets, to see if they are tenanted by "croton bugs," or are kept sweet and in order. She never asks what becomes of the large joints of meat which are carried from the table, and which might possibly to any other than a "real lady" suggest something use-able for breakfast. She is quite indifferent how many retainers feed each meal in her kitchen at her expense; and if she gives her cook ten dollars to go to market, she is never "vulgar" enough to inquire about the change. Before the model mistress invites her friends to dinner or to tea, she should always ask her cook or nurse-maid if their engagements out will render it convenient. Also she must have no objection to having her nurse, when she takes baby out for the fresh air, spend her time in the different kitchens where her acquaintances live, and keep baby sweltering in her out-door clothes inhaling beef-steak smoke and other agreeable vapors. She must never object to the nurse flirting obliviously in the Park with her "beau," while "little Tot" tumbles into the fountain, or lies sprawling helplessly on her stomach on the gravel-walk, moaning for assistance to rise. She must never hint that nurse should be less at any time than two hours eating her breakfast, although her mistress may be waiting to see some one in the parlor, or have other urgent reasons for her return, not although her mistress herself requires no more than half an hour for her own breakfast. She must never be "fussy" enough to notice whether the baby's nurse sticks needles into the waist of her dress, or places pins in it, so that they lacerate the child whenever it is moved about. In short, she must have that beautiful and amiable faith in human nature that is always so lovely to contemplate in "female woman," how antagonistic soever her experience may have been to this serene faith. In short, no "real lady" bothers herself any way about her help, in nursery or kitchen, save to pay "first rate" wages and no questions asked.

Fanny Fern.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Disconsolate.—This correspondent is a married lady, who is unhappy in her home relations, as neither her husband nor her children show her that respect or exhibit for her that affection which she thinks they should show and exhibit. "Life looks very gloomy to me," she says, "and it seems as though all the bright sunshine that beamed upon my early wedded path has been withdrawn never more to be returned." and much more in the same strain. And what renders this matter more important than it would be were it the only case of the kind, is the fact that we are constantly in the receipt of letters of similar import. Nor are such letters altogether confined to "disconsolate" wives. There are "disconsolate" husbands, too; and they write us letters asking for advice. There seems to be, to speak metaphorically,

"Something rotten in the State of Denmark"—

or, at least, in the state of matrimony. We must confess that we feel inclined to sympathize with the unhappy wives; but a blubbering husband is one of our especial aversions. A man ought to be able to take care of himself under almost any circumstances. Besides, as a general thing, it is a man's own fault if his home be not a happy one, though there are of course some striking exceptions to this rule. A thoroughly good husband rarely fails of having a thoroughly good wife and home. Biographers, essayists and lecturers, in touching on this subject, often quote Burke's declaration to the effect that "Every care vanished the moment he entered beneath his own roof," as a high compliment to Mrs. Burke and an evidence of her superior wifely excellencies. But we think that no one can read the life of Burke critically without clearly perceiving that his domestic happiness was due more to his own ever-active goodness of heart and grandeur of soul and winning tenderness of disposition than to all other influences beneath his roof. But when the husband and father is a fireside ruffian, or a morose tyrant, or a dissipated reveller, or is given to seeking his pleasures exclusively away from his home and family, the wife and mother can never know domestic happiness. Such unfortunates can only do the best they can, and look to Heaven for beneficent results. Their case is beyond the reach of human aid. Their sorrows may be alleviated, and their sinking hands be to some degree upheld, by sympathy and appreciation; but the burden can only be wholly lifted from their weary shoulders by One who beareth the burdens of all who appeal to Him for aid, in sincerity and truth.

E. C. L.—We cannot say whether a soldier who has served two years in the army will stand any better chance to do well in business than he would have stood had he never gone to the war. But as to your other question, in regard to his chances of promotion in case he should re-enlist, we can say that we think there is no doubt that his chances would be far greater than those of a raw recruit. The government have determined to make promotions hereafter from among those who have seen service and have some practical knowledge of the art of war. This is a wise determination; it has the approbation of the best officers and of the people, and will doubtless be persistently carried out. For this reason, and for many others, the soldiers who have served two years have great advantages over those who have never yet smelt powder on the battle field.

Horatio.—The revenue stamps for a deed of land, the value or price of which is sixty-five thousand dollars, would be $120. If the price or value were thirty-five thousand dollars, the stamps would be $60. You need not put the whole amount on in one stamp, but may put on several stamps, the aggregate amount of which would make up the total required. You need not now stamp both a bond and mortgage given to secure the same debt, but may put your stamp on whichever you please. Prior to the amendment of the law passed the 3rd of March, 1863, both the bond and the mortgage had to be stamped, which made the tax fall rather heavily upon mortgageors.

Heroine.—The bare mention of a mother's wishes should be sufficient to command the cheerful obedience of a "heroine." Your special pleading to excuse your contemplated disregard of your mother's commands is of no avail with us, and it will probably be as futile so far as your own conscience is concerned, for you really seem to be a good girl who has been temporarily misguided by a spasm of vehement selfishness, under strong temptations. You would be far happier should you sacrifice your own wishes in the matter to those of your mother, than any empty enjoyment that would flow from your disobedience could make you.

Dixie.—You should not allow your boys to annoy your neighbors, if you wish to live in peace with them. Of course, no one has a right to lay violent hands on another's children, by way of chastisement. Complaint should be made in due and proper form to the father of the offenders, and the matter, *as between him and his children*, left entirely to his own sense and propriety in the premises. If he does not give the injured party satisfaction, then the latter may have good cause to call him to account personally.

Fruit-grower.—It is too early to determine with any degree of accuracy what kind of a fruit season we shall have this year. The *general* promise may be as favorable as you think it is; but there is still an abundance of time for misfortunes to overtake the fruit-growers. We hope, however, that their crops may be exuberant and of the best qualities.

Woodwill, at Camp Chase, says: "I have now been in the service of the United States for eight months, and during that time I have been in two of the bloodiest battles, besides a good many skirmishes, fights, &c. Those two battles were fought with heavy loss on both sides, the one at Antietam and the other at Murfreesborough. At the latter I was taken by the enemy (with a Minnié wound in my arm) and carried through Dixie. Sometimes I could get something to eat, while at other times I would have to go without for three or four days. I was kept in Dixie for 28 days, two-thirds starved, half naked, and so down-hearted I was ready to die any moment. At last we came within our lines. Having a rich father at home, in Pennsylvania, I at once wrote to him about my condition, and requested him to send me some money. He did so; but I did not get it, nor the letter either. But let that go as it is. I now ask you how I shall get home—being 600 miles away from there? The saying is, that they do not grant any furloughs, yet two of my regiment have got them, and I have seen three other furloughs that were granted by the Secretary of War. I enlisted contrary to the wish of my father; left college contrary to the wish of the principal; was exempt from the draft, and was willing to go and risk my life any time for the sake of serving my country, as the case might be. Let me have your opinion on the subject. I am neither a drunkard, a loafer, nor a card player, but try to do my duty like a man and a patriot." Why not frankly state your case to your colonel, or to the chaplain of your regiment, and get his assistance, if you really deserve to have a furlough? You seem to be too good a soldier to be sent off home, while there is promise of hot work in the Southwest.

Bashfulness, who informs us that he writes in great trepidation, sends us the following letter which will doubtless excite the sympathy or the laughter of every girl who reads it. He says: "I have a simple question to ask you, and that is, 'is it man's *secular duty* to God to associate with the ladies?' I will simply state my case and reason for asking you. I am a young man and a student at ——— College. I *hate* and FEAR the women, and always try to avoid them. Now, my fellow collegiates ridicule me on account of it. I can never meet or speak to a lady without blushing like a girl, and I become so confused that I can hardly speak. Now, am I wrong or not to refuse to mix in society? for I would rather stand upon the battle-field than have to stand face to face with a troop of young girls." What a collegiate goose you are. You, of all silly young men, ought to associate with the ladies—if they will allow you to do so. As for your "hating" them, *that* is all nonsense. If you did not adore the very ground they walk upon, you would not be so bashful when in their presence. Your only hope of prosperity or happiness evidently lies in your being able to face with some degree of self-possession the battery of woman's smiles and eyes. Therefore, you would do well to set about qualifying yourself at once to go through that ordeal.

Central Park.—You must be careful how you attempt to play upon the fears of others by sending them threatening letters, demanding money of them. You might get into State's Prison by such reprehensible conduct. The statute, in such case made and provided, says, that "Every person who shall knowingly send or deliver, or shall make, and for the purpose of being delivered or sent, shall part with the possession of, any letter or writing, with or without a name subscribed thereto, or signed with a fictitious name, or with any letter, mark or other designation, threatening therein to accuse any person of any crime, or to do any injury to the person or property of any one, with a view or intent to extort or gain any money or property of any description, belonging to another, shall, upon conviction, *be adjudged guilty of an attempt to rob*, and shall be punished by imprisonment in a State prison not exceeding five years." You will see, therefore, that if you should be found out, your joke might prove to be a most sorry one for you; as it would do you no good to plead that you wrote and sent your threatening letters merely for the purpose of having a little fun.

Distraction.—According to all that we have read upon the subject, it is a difficult, if not an impossible thing, to draw the line with accuracy between a sound mind and an unsound one. Insanity has so many conditions, degrees and phenomena, that any positive judgment in regard to it, except in extreme and sharply defined cases, is almost impossible. A slight degree of insanity is sufficient, however, to absolve the victim from moral or legal accountability before human tribunals. As Erskine once said, in one of his great speeches (on this subject), "It is not necessary that *reason be hurled from her throne*; it is sufficient if *distraction sit down beside her*."

Solomon.—It does not make much difference what course you pursue to get an education *if you only throw* your whole heart and soul into the matter. Read Mrs. Southworth's account of the struggles of her little hero, Ishmael Worth, as set forth in the instalment of her story, "Self-Made, or Out of the Depths," in this week's Ledger, and then take pattern therefrom and go ahead. A boy who really hungers and thirsts for an education will be pretty certain to get it, in some way. Providence seldom fails to open up a path before the earnest, persistent worker, no matter with what difficulties he at first may be environed.

M. R.—You ought to go home, as soon as possible, and tell your mother all about the case. It is a very bad and dangerous thing for a girl to have any secrets from her mother—especially any *love* secrets. Harm is almost certain to flow from such concealments. Just hold all your feelings in check, as much as you possibly can, until you can pour the whole story into the hospitable ear of your mother. The man to whom you refer evidently needs watching closely; and you should be careful not to commit yourself before him or on account of him, until with your mother's aid you can fathom his position, character and intentions.

Tenant says he is living in a house that is claimed by two parties; that he does not know to which of them he should pay the rent, and therefore does not pay either of them; and that one of the claimants has ordered him to move, and threatens to have him ejected if he does not obey. In this dilemma, "Tenant" wants to know what he had better do. He ought to get out of the scrape as soon as possible, by quitting the premises, if he loves quiet; but if he is fond of a row and of litigation, regardless of expense, the best thing for him to do would be to hold on and fight both parties.

Vexatious.—If the young man *will* persist in annoying you with his protestations of love and offers of marriage, notwithstanding your repeated requests for him to cease doing so, you should refuse to see him at all; and if he forces himself into your presence, then have him removed. You probably have some masculine relative on whom you could depend to relieve you of such a troublesome acquaintance.

C. R.—The words "Oyer and Terminer," as applied to courts, mean courts for the trial of offences against the laws, or "criminal" courts; or, as they are sometimes called, "jail delivery" courts. The words are from the old law French, and mean *to hear and determine*. The court *hears* the charge against a prisoner and what he has to say in his defence, and then *determines* what shall be done about the matter.

Hunter puts the following question: "Can you inform me whether or not a young man could go out on the prairies and woods out West, for about two years, and make enough for an object by getting and bringing to market the skins of buffaloes, otters, bears, &c., and about how much each skin would be worth in market?" We think "a young man" could make more money at wood-sawing than by such an expedition.

Y. Z.—We decline to give you the information—or rather the gossip—which you request us to furnish you with. We do not meddle with such matters, nor with anybody's private business. The ill-luck which you complain of having been subject to, may arise from your not practically remembering the old story of the man who made a fortune by minding his own business.

Ethel.—The soldier to whom you refer may never have received the communications which you allege were sent to him. He may be in hospital too sick to write. He may be disabled by wounds. He may be dead. You should not judge a man who is absent in the army hastily or harshly about such matters.

P. L.—It is rather too early to begin to discuss "the national oration for the Fourth of July, 1876." There will doubtless be great orations delivered on that day; and no doubt many an orator now living contemplates with regret the probability of his passing off the stage before that great centennial anniversary will arrive.

C. K. O.—You could not do better than to go to the Scriptures for information as to what is apt to be the result of treating one's parents disrespectfully. The penalties pronounced in the Bible upon those who do not behave properly toward their father and mother cannot be improved upon.

G. P. T. (Suffolk county).—The New York Sun has not raised its price. It is still published at one cent a copy. You can have it sent by mail for three months by enclosing one dollar to its proprietor.

Old Subscriber.—We do not know of any naval school in the United States, of any prominence, except the United States Naval Academy itself.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*